SAT. SPECIAL / G6

Show biz's beautiful love stories

NEWS/ A6

Puno to leave Cabinet, seeks old seat in House

WORLD / A23

Rival Palestine factions Fatah, Hamas ink historic power-sharing deal

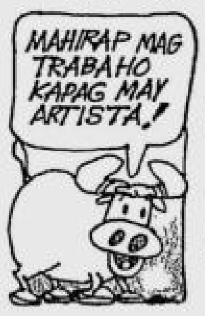
SUPER / C4

7 things to say to your special dude to sabotage Valentine's

NEWS / A2

GMA summons Congress to special session

Comelec bans kissing, hugging of candidates


MAHIRAP MAG TRABAHO KAPAG MAY ARTISTA!

By Jerome Aning

NO HUGGING, KISSING and shrieking, please. We're public officers.

The Commission on Elections has forbidden its officials and employees from leaving their desks

COMELEC/ A18

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Saturday, February 10, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 64 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

RP now int'l test center for nurses going to US

By Christian V. Esguerra

IS THE WORST FINALLY OVER FOR PHILIPPINE nurses seeking high-paying jobs in the United States?

Despite the scandal created by the June 2006 licensure exams, the Philippines finally got the nod of American officials to be a testing center for the National Council Licensure Examination

RP NOW/ A6

Villar is key to decision

Wednesday Group keeps 'em guessing

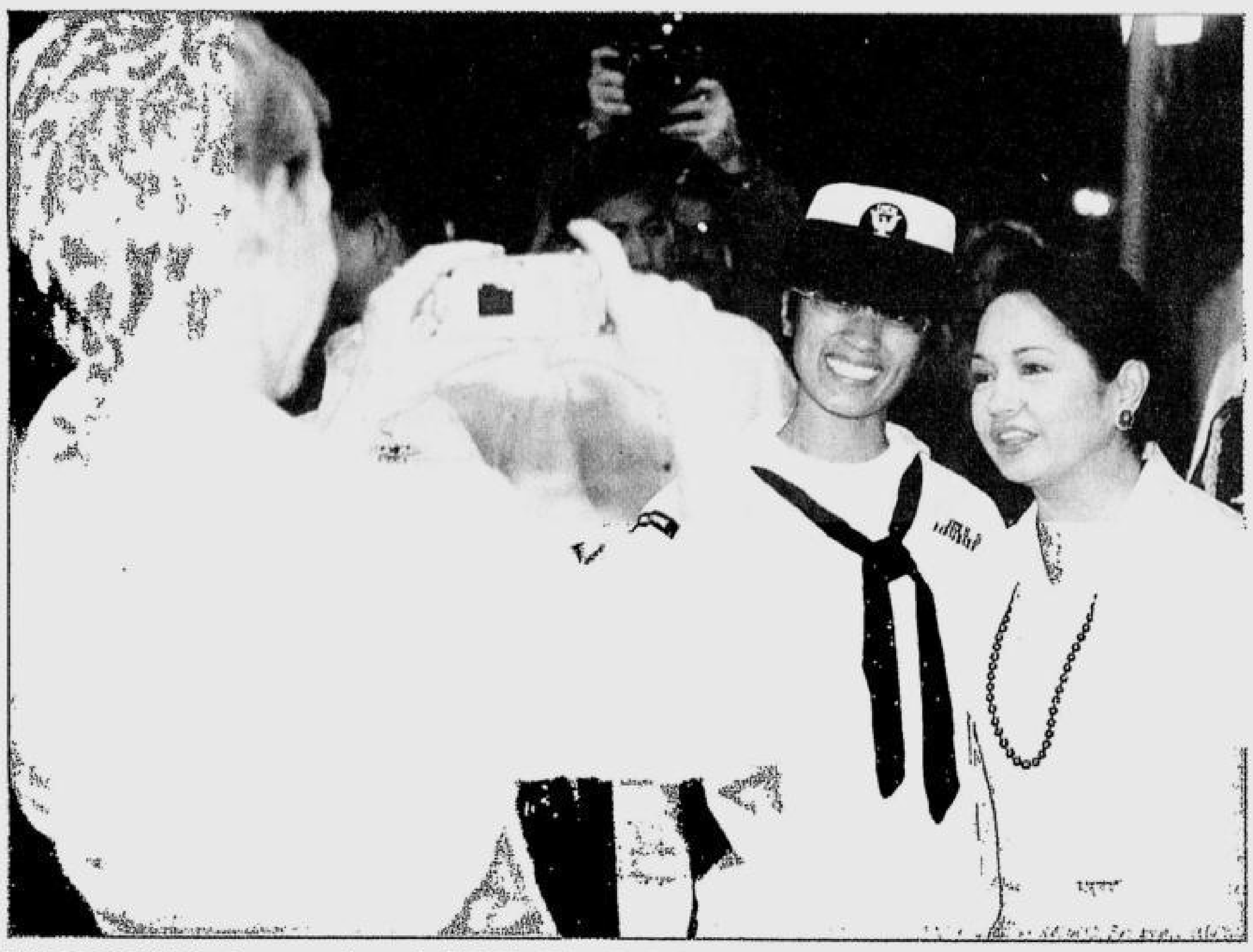
By Cynthia D. Balana and TJ Burgonio

SENATE PRESIDENT Manuel Villar Jr. and his three colleagues in the Wednesday Group yesterday continued to keep the public guessing on whether they would align with the administration or the opposition or go independent in the May 14 senatorial election.

Among the four senators who make up the group, it was Villar who was "anguishing" because "Villar does not want to have enemies at this time," said a source who was privy to the discussions but was not authorized by the group to speak to the media.

"Manny Villar wants to keep his post as Senate President because he is eyeing the presidential election in 2010," the source told the INQUIRER. "Villar said he cannot afford to have enemies from both

VILLAR/ A6



THE GOOD SHIP: During a reception on the USS Blue Ridge Muelle de San Francisco, President Arroyo poses with a Filipina crew member with no less than US envoy to the Philippines Kristie Kenney capturing the moment. The US naval ship, which docked at Pier 13, South Harbor, was here on a goodwill visit Thursday and Friday. In partnership with the AFP, the ship donated goods and provided free health clinics and other community projects.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Misamis Or. leftist killed; 272nd victim

By Grace Cantal-Albasin
Inquirer Mindanao
and Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—THE SEVEN men had arrived in a van and the family of militant leader Dalmacio Gandinao thought they were dropping in for a visit.

Then bursts of gunfire followed and the 73-year-old Bayan Muna coordinator for Misamis Oriental fell dead, the latest victim in a wave of assassinations of political activists in the country that has gone unchecked despite international outrage.

Gandinao, also chair of the Misamis Oriental Farmers Association, was shot dead in his house in Salay town at about 7 p.m. on Thursday, police said yesterday.

He was the 272nd militant killed since President Macapagal-Arroyo took office, according to an INQUIRER tally. Of that number, 114 were Bayan Muna members.

In a separate violence, labor leader Gerry Cristobal was critically wounded yesterday when two men on a motorcycle fired at him in Imus, Cavite. It was the second attempt on his life in 10 months.

The attacks occurred just before the scheduled visit starting tomorrow of United Nations special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, Philip Alston, whom the government had invited to look into the killings of militants. *(Story on Page A11.)*

Alston is to meet, among others, officials of the Commission on Human Rights and representatives of other human rights organizations.

MISAMIS/ A18

Nat'l pols' party-hopping confuses 'foot soldiers'

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

ALAMINOS CITY—LOCAL CANDIDATES, the "foot soldiers" of the political parties, are becoming confused because of the party-switching of national politicians in the run-up to the May 14 elections, according to Mayor Hernani Braganza.

Braganza said some local candidates no longer knew whether they belonged to the ruling Lakas-CMD, the Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kampi), or other parties.

He said it confused local officials that their party mates yesterday were now on the other side of the political fence, and that those on their side today would not be there tomorrow because of personal interests.

"When foot soldiers adept in politics are confused, the more the voters would be [confused]," he told reporters on Thursday.

Braganza, a former Pangasinan congressman and member of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet, also said he was retiring from politics and would not seek a second term as mayor.

He said Philippine politics had turned into a "politics of compromise, with no principles," leading him to decide not to seek reelection.

"*Wala na* (No more). I'm done. I cannot be here forever. We have a 10-year

NATIONAL/ A6

Sis believes kidnapped Filipina is still alive

By Volt Contreras

A SISTER OF JOSIEBETH FOROOZAN, the 26th Filipino abducted in Nigeria over the past two months, said yesterday her kidnappers claimed they lost her after she fought back while they were on a pumpboat and she "jumped into the water."

The younger sister, Jane Gregorio, said her family believed that Foroozan was still alive, doubting sketchy reports reaching Manila that the 37-year-old mother of two may already be dead.

"The kidnappers called up (Foroozan's Iranian husband) to say that my sister fought back and jumped into the water. But knowing my sister, we believe she wouldn't do something like that," Gregorio told reporters at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

"We have high hopes that she's still alive. We don't believe she's dead. I know my sister to be someone of great courage and who wouldn't do something that can be considered suicidal," Gregorio said in Filipino, on her way to meet DFA officials to seek help.

She said initial checks done by her family with Nigerian authorities proved "negative" earlier reports that a woman's body had been recovered in waters where Foroozan and her abductors were believed to have been.

Authorities have counted Foroozan (not Orasan, as previously reported), as the first female victim of a spate of kidnappings victimizing foreigners in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta.

PHOTO OF KIDNAPPED VICTIM Josiebeth with her husband Manouch Foroozan and their two children comes from her sister who came to the DFA to ask for help.

AFP

Unidentified gunmen seized her around midday of Feb. 7 near a bank on Stadium Road in Port Harcourt, Nigeria's oil capital.

Gregorio, 30, said her sister still managed to call her husband Manouch on her mobile phone before the phone was snatched away by the abductors.

SIS BELIEVES/ A10

Anna Nicole Smith, pop-culture icon; 39

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA—Anna Nicole Smith, the curvaceous blonde whose life played out as an extraordinary tabloid tale—Playboy centerfold, Guess jeans model, bride of an octogenarian oil billionaire, reality-show subject, tragic mother—has died after collapsing at a hotel. She was 39.

She was stricken while staying at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino and was rushed to a hospital Thursday (Friday in Manila). Edwina Johnson, chief investigator for the Broward County Medical Examiner's Office, said the cause of death was under investigation. An autopsy was scheduled on Friday.

Just five months ago, Smith's 20-year-old son, Daniel, died suddenly in the Bahamas in what was believed to be a drug-related death. *(Related story on Page A10).*

Seminole Police Chief Charlie Tiger said a private nurse called paramedics after finding Smith unresponsive in her sixth-floor room at the hotel, which is on an Indian reservation. He said Smith's bodyguard administered CPR, but she was declared dead at a hospital. Later Thursday, two sheriff's deputies carried out at least eight brown paper bags sealed with red evidence tape from Smith's hotel room.

Dr. Joshua Perper, the chief Broward County medical examiner who will perform the autopsy, said if her death was from natural

ANNA/ A10

PLAYBOY
ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN
RAP'S ORIGINAL GANGSTA, ICE-T, ON PRISON, BLOODS AND THE HOOD
A RED-HOT VALENTINE FROM ANNA NICOLE SMITH
OUCH! THE FIRST WORD IN BODY PIERCING
AP/PLAYBOY

COVER GIRL FEB. 4, 1994, the same year Anna Nicole Smith married an 89-year-old oil billionaire.

GMA walks out of Inquirer interview

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S temper flared once again when she abruptly ended an interview with the INQUIRER in front of a stunned audience which included three Cabinet secretaries and an official of the International Monetary Fund.

The President was nettled by repeated questions posed by this reporter and Christine O. Avendaño (both on their last day of covering the Malacañang beat) on why the benefits of the country's spectacular economic growth have not trickled down to the grass roots. She blew her top even before the INQUIRER could finish the brief interview's final question: "Isn't it a concern for you, Ma'am, that the billionaires during the time of Marcos and Ramos are also the same billionaires now?"

"Those are political questions, Gil. Thank you. That's the end, thank you. I said it's [just] follow-up questions here. Thank you. And good luck to you in the Senate (where this reporter would be covering starting today) and in the defense (where Avendaño would be covering also starting today). OK thanks," said the President who suddenly pushed her chair back and stood up.

GMA/ A18

EZ2
9 15

FOUR DIGIT
6 2 3 2

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
6 7 8 | 9 2 8
(All in exact order)

MEGALOTTO 6/45
8 9 23 41 44 45
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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/02/09/07 SOURCE PAGASA

Maliksi back as Cavite gov

By Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon

CAVITE Gov. Erineo "Ayong" Maliksi raises his hands in triumph following his reinstatement by the Ombudsman. At left is Liberal Party colleague, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.
MARLON RAMOS/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

TRECE MARTIRES CITY—LIKE A triumphant warrior returning from battle, Cavite Gov. Erineo "Ayong" Maliksi yesterday reclaimed his seat at the provincial capitol after the Ombudsman cleared him of graft charges in connection with the alleged spurious purchase and ghost delivery of P7.5 million worth of rice.

The Ombudsman's decision dated Feb. 7 comes less than a month after Maliksi was forced out of office to serve a six-month suspension order and ends over a year-and-a-half of legal squabbling and political tension in Cavite, the fast growing southern flank of Metro Manila.

An emotional Maliksi faced about a thousand supporters and political allies led by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, and thanked them "for believing in his innocence."

Vice governor Juanito Victor Remulla, who had filed the graft case against rival Maliksi in July 2005 and took over as acting governor last Jan. 9 after the lapse of a temporary restraining order and later a preliminary injunction on the case, calmly handed over the disputed office.

In a 23-page resolution, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez said Remulla failed to present enough evidence to show that Maliksi, together with co-accused, Cavite trader Carmencita Guinto, defrauded the government when he purchased 1,000 sacks of high-grade sinandomeng rice in October 2004.

The Ombudsman said the Cavite provincial government did not suffer any undue injury from the rice deal as it was favorable to the province. It noted that at P1,000 per sack, the rice was P200 cheaper than the prevailing market price.

The Ombudsman also said there was also no proof of "bad faith" in the deal, noting that Maliksi had merely responded to a request for assistance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Cavite.

The Ombudsman took note of the DSWD letter to Maliksi on Sept. 2, 2004, which said "hunger is prevalent in the slum areas in the province and unless immediate action is taken, sickness and probably deaths due to starvation would occur."

It also noted that Maliksi's purchase was backed by a legal opinion from the provincial legal officer that the purchase was above board.

"The contention that no rice deliveries were made must fail," the Ombudsman said.

In his complaint, Remulla had alleged that there were no rice deliveries as claimed by Maliksi and that the purchase did not go through the proper bidding process. He had charged that the governor bought the rice from a private store and not from the National Food Authority (NFA) which caused a P750, 000 "unwarranted benefit" to Guinto. In an earlier interview, he called the DSWD one of the most corrupt government offices in Cavite.

Reacting to the final ruling of the Ombudsman, Remulla lamented that the antigraft body made its decision without conducting a formal investigation at the capitol.

"There were no witnesses interviewed. The Ombudsman did not subpoena any documents. They based their decision just on the affidavits that the two parties submitted," he said.

But he was quick to add that he respects the decision of the Ombudsman.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, acting on the Ombudsman's resolution, immediately ordered Maliksi's reinstatement. The Ombudsman's decision, Puno said, was "immediately final, executory and unappealable as stated under existing rules and regulations governing penalties imposed on local officials."

Atienza, president of a Liberal Party faction, said Maliksi's reinstatement was "a triumph of the rule of law and autonomy of local governments."

Maliksi's own comment was that "This was just a political case." *With reports from Norman Bordadora*

GMA summons Congress to special session

By Christine Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo yesterday called for a special session of Congress from Feb. 19 to 20, even as some legislators are already either out campaigning or set to launch their reelection bids for the May polls.

The President, who issued Proclamation 1235 calling for a two-day special session of Congress, said she wanted the legislators to reconvene to pass "some legislation already in a very, very advanced stage."

"If we start from scratch in the next session, what a pity. All that we've worked for in the last two years would have gone to waste," Ms Arroyo said.

Congress adjourned last Thursday for a four-month election break without passing several priority measures. It will resume session on June 4.

Among the bills that the President wants passed is the proposed anti-terror law, which only needs the ratification of the House as the Senate ratified it on Thursday night.

Malacañang has been pushing for the passage of the anti-terror bill which the President said would give "more legal teeth" to the government's fight against terrorism.

Another bill that Ms Arroyo said should be immediately passed is a measure seeking to put up a centralized credit information bureau, a bill authored in the Senate by Sen. Edgardo Angara.

A bicameral conference committee has approved in principle the proposed Credit Information Act which will allow banks to immediately assess the credit-worthiness of borrowers.

Other bills that only require ratification, the last stage for a measure to be considered approved by Congress, are those pertaining to the Public Attorneys Office and Solicitor General Act, according to Joey Salceda, the President's new chief of staff.

"It would be a waste [if they are not passed now] because these measures are already in advanced stages. Much effort has been invested in these bills," Salceda told reporters.

Speaker Jose de Venecia said he had already consulted and gotten support for the special session from Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Deputy Majority Leader Art Defensor as well as Sen. Richard Gordon.

"Many of the bills are already in the advanced stage. The people will punish those who will be absent," he said.

Party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva claimed that Malacañang was pressuring Congress to pass a measure to extend for another 25 years the charter and franchise of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

Villanueva, who represents the Citizens Battle Against Corruption party-list group, said Pagcor was a reliable source of campaign funds for re-electionist senators, congressmen and other politicians.

De Venecia said the Senate had "mangled and diluted" the anti-terror bill rendering it a "a toothless tiger."

"But we in the House have to ratify it because it's being awaited by the international community and our people," he said.

The Senate managed to ratify the anti-terror bill and the measure seeking to compensate Marcos rights abuse victims, but the House, marked by absenteeism on the last session day, had to adjourn when the minority threatened to question the quorum.

Party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño was jubilant that the minority had blocked the ratification of the anti-terror bill and the Pagcor franchise bill.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez said he was ready to attend the special session.

"But is the majority ready? They bungled the passage of the anti-terror bill, a top priority bill, by not showing up," he asked.

He asked if the Senate could even muster a quorum with Senate President Manuel Villar and Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan out campaigning for reelection.

Sen. Franklin Drilon said he did not see any basis to call a special session. He said that as far as he was concerned, Congress had already passed the single most important measure—the P1.126 trillion national budget for 2007.

"What else do we need to ratify? We can ratify everything when we come back in June The country will not collapse if these bills are not ratified between now and June," he said.

With a report from TJ Burgonio

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
Republic of the Philippines

Supply and Installation of Stand-By Generator Sets for the Pasig River Ferry Stations

The PRRC, through the General Appropriations Act of 2007 intends to apply the sum of **Eight million forty six thousand seven hundred four pesos and 32/100 centavos (P8,046,704.32) being the Approved Budget for the Contract to payments under the contract for Supply and Installation of Stand-by generator Sets (PRFS-SG-01).** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The PRRC now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for Supply and Installation of Stand-By Generator Sets for the Pasig River Ferry Stations (PRFS-SG-01). Delivery of GOODS is required by **April 10, 2007**. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Activity for the Whole Contract Package
Supply and Installation of 50KVA SG for Guadalupe Ferry Station
Supply and Installation of 25KVA SG for Escolta Ferry Station
Supply and Installation of 35KVA SG for Sta. Ana Ferry Station
Supply and Installation of 30KVA SG for Hulo Ferry Station
Supply and Installation of 40KVA SG for Lambingan Ferry Station
Supply and Installation of 35KVA SG for PUP Ferry Station
Supply and Installation of 25KVA SG for Plaza Mexico Ferry Station
Supply and Installation of 30KVA SG for Valenzuela Ferry Station

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
Deputy Executive Director, Atty. Zoilo L. Andin, Jr.
5F DENR Main Building, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from **February 10-17, 2007, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** at the address below upon submission of Letter of Intent and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **THIRTEEN THOUSAND PESOS (Php 13,000.00)**. The method of payment shall be made only upon a certification by the Head of the Procuring Entity to the effect that the Goods have been rendered or delivered in accordance with the terms of the Contract and have been duly inspected and accepted. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *PRRC-IABAC will* hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties at the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission - **PRRC Conference Room, 5/F DENR Main Building, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City** on February 13, 2007, 10:00 a.m.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before February 26, 2007, 1:00 p.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form and amount stated in the Bid Data Sheet or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted

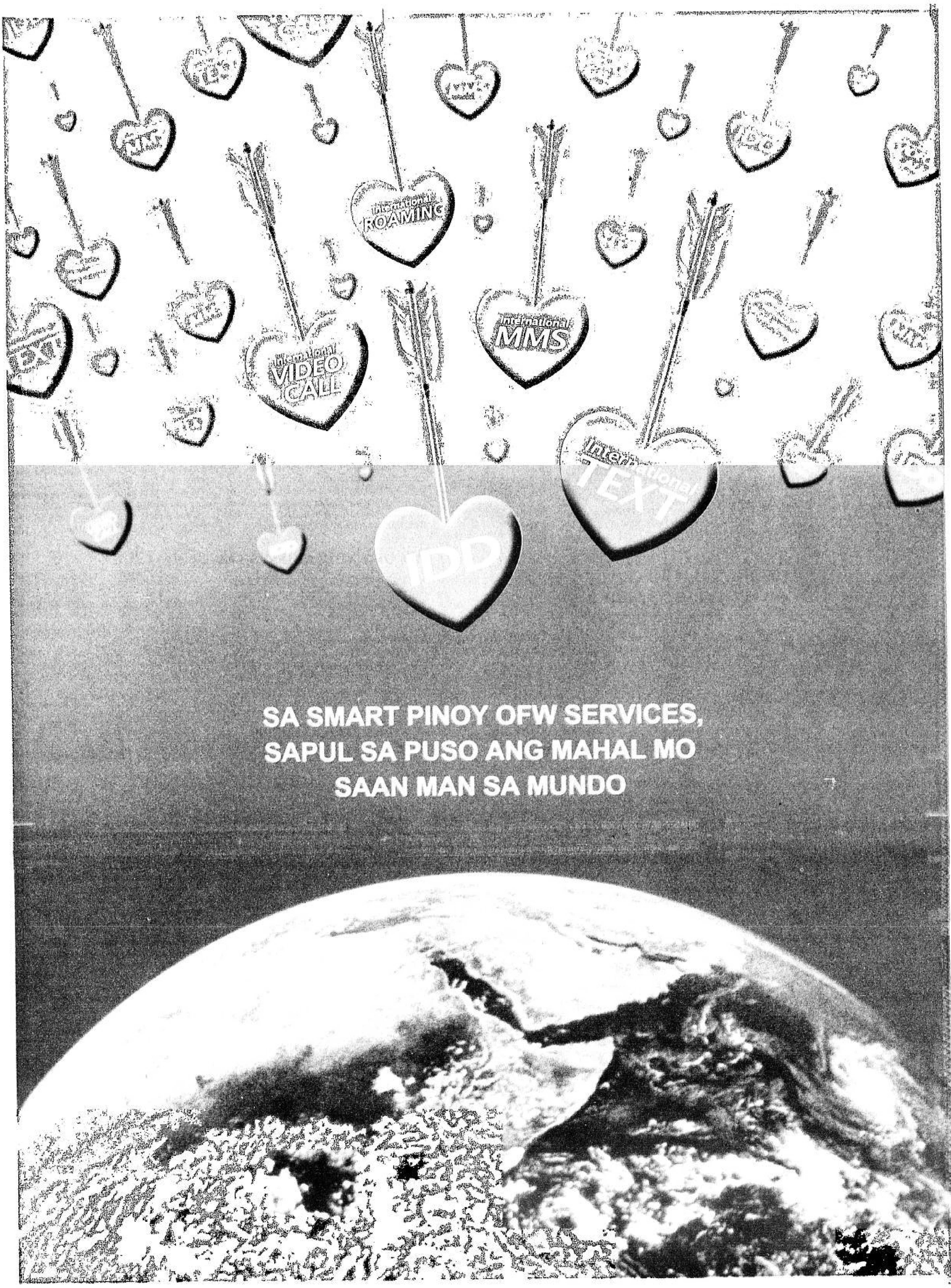
Bid opening shall be on February 26, 2007, 1:30 p.m. at the **PRRC Conference Room**. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The PRRC-IABAC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
Deputy Executive Director Atty. Zoilo L. Andin, Jr.
5F DENR Main Building, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. +632 926 6449
Fax: +632 926 5233

(Sgd.) Atty. ZOILO L. ANDIN
BAC-Chairperson

(PDI - Feb 3 & 10, 2007)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'ABUSE OF AUTHORITY'

Napolcom strips Cavite mayor of police powers

By Alcuin Papa

THE NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION (Napolcom) yesterday stripped Bacoor, Cavite, Mayor Jessie Castillo of his police powers after he padlocked the town's police station last Wednesday.

Philippine National Police (PNP) spokesperson Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao said the Napolcom issued a resolution yesterday that took away the supervision of Bacoor policemen from Castillo.

"The power to supervise and control the police has been removed from the mayor," Pagdilao told reporters yesterday.

In a three-page resolution, the Napolcom said Castillo committed "abuse of authority" by locking down the police station and ordering Bacoor police chief Chief Insp. Alex Borja to return all equipment, supplies and vehicles which the mayor said were bought with the budget of the municipality.

"These actions of Mayor Castillo constitute abuse of authority that the commission cannot tolerate nor condone. The recall of all the equipment, supplies and padlocking the police station placed the peace, order and security of the Municipality of Bacoor in jeopardy and evidently crippled the operational function of the Bacoor police station," the Napolcom said.

"The mayor treated the logistical support extended to the PNP as his own," it added.

The Napolcom also said that the primary reason for Castillo's action was the alleged failure of the Bacoor police "to give protection to the people by ignoring the threats his family is receiving for the past few days."

If indeed the Bacoor police failed to perform their duties, the Napolcom said Castillo should have taken legal action and followed the prescribed procedures like recommending the relief of Borja through the PNP hierarchy.

"Instead of following the procedure and exercising the above-mentioned powers, Mayor Castillo arrogated unto himself the matter of addressing his dissatisfaction with the performance of Bacoor police station by withdrawing the logistical support and ordering the police station padlocked," the Napolcom said.

The resolution was signed by Napolcom officials led by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and PNP Chief Director General Oscar Calderon.

Pagdilao said it was up to the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) whether or not to file the appropriate charges against Castillo.

He added that as of yesterday the Bacoor police station had been opened. "All the supplies and equipment were returned and everything is back to normal," he said.

Art of Living classes start Feb. 12

AOL PHILIPPINES WILL HOLD ITS NEXT ART of Living Part I course from Feb. 12-17, Monday to Saturday in two classes.

Morning sessions from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, will be at Bay 3 Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Afternoon sessions from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., will be at 8 Phoenix Subd., Henry Javier St., Pasig City (near Valle Verde Country Club).

On the last day of Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., there will be a combined session for both morning and afternoon groups at the Phoenix Subdivision venue.

For details, visit the website: www.artofliving.org.ph.

Or e-mail info@artof living.org.ph or text AOL <your name> <your inquiry> to 2920. To register, call or text Denise at 0916-321-9223.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, February 10, 2007
5th Week in Ordinary Time
Scholastica

1st Reading: **Gen 3:9-24**
Gospel: **Mark 8:1-10**

Jesus was in the midst of another large crowd that obviously had nothing to eat. So he called his disciples and said to them, "I feel sorry for these people because they have been with me for three days and now have nothing to eat. If I send them to their homes hungry, they will faint on the way; some of them have come a long way."

His disciples replied, "Where in a deserted place like this could we get enough bread to feed these people?" He asked them, "How many loaves have you?" And they answered, "Seven."

Then he ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Taking the seven loaves and giving thanks, he broke them and handed them to his disciples to distribute. And they distributed them among the people. They also had some small fish, so Jesus said a blessing and asked that these be shared as well.

The people ate and were satisfied. The broken pieces were collected, seven wicker baskets full of leftovers. Now there had been about four thousand people. Jesus sent them away and immediately got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

Commentary

God goes after Adam and Eve in the garden. There are consequences for knowing good and evil: the pangs of childbirth, the harshness of work/survival. And then God made garments for them to help them live. They are exiled from the garden so that they cannot eat of the tree of life. And the garden was sealed. A strange story and a strange God—but a story that seeks to explain how evil, suffering, struggle, pain, and death came into the world. Yet there is a God who cares for who he has created.

Jesus is God in flesh, moved with pity for the crowd, intent on feeding them, and having anyone who is his disciple care for the needs of the masses of people—to make sure they get enough of what they need. The disciples begin by giving away and sharing what they have for themselves. Seven loaves feed 4,000 and there is enough left over—7 baskets (a number that signifies infinity—enough to feed everyone). This is our story and our God.

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DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on February 27, 2007, 10:00 am, 6th Floor CAM Conference Room, DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM SELLING PRICE
R. Castillo St., Agdao, Davao City	1,303 sq.m. parcel of land with warehouse/ residential buildings erected thereon, covered with TCT – T112220	₱ 15,833,000.00
Guanzon St., Barangay III, Kabankalan City	1,012 sq.m. adjoining 2 parcel of lots covered with TCT Nos. T-179416 and T-179417	7,084,000.00
Merchan St., Barangay Poblacion, Lucena City	805 sq.m. lot with TCT No. T-30703	24,236,500.00
Paseo del Congreso Catmon, Malolos City, Bulacan	866 sq.m. adjoining 2 parcel of lots covered with TCT Nos. T-91884 and T-91885	19,052,000.00
Johnston Subdivision, San Jose Zamboanga City	1,445 sq.m. adjoining 3 parcel of lots covered with TCT Nos. T-26,296, T-26,297 and T-26,298	6,140,000.00
Expedition Drive cor. Jaguar St., Mercado Village, Barangay Pulong Sta. Cruz, Sta. Rosa, Laguna	2,150 sq.m. lot with TCT No. T-385520	32,250,000.00
Bula, Gen. Santos City	2,241 sq.m. adjoining parcel of lots covered with TCT Nos. T-1733, T-1734, T-1735 and T-1736	2,706,400.00
Barangay Magsaysay, Polomolok, South Cotabato	794 sq.m. adjoining parcel of lots covered with TCT Nos. T-78490 and T-78491	3,917,000.00
Lot 3 Blk 11, Oro Vista Village, Barangay Carmen, Cag. De Oro City	1,012 sq.m. lot with TCT No. T-9863	1,822,000.00
Ayala Highway, Barangay Balintawak, North Lipa City	3,165 sq.m. adjoining parcel of lots covered with TCT Nos. T-108495 and T-108496	37,663,500.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the WSD, PSM Basement, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK, THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone number 818-9511 local 2000/2001

(PDI - Feb. 10 & 11, 2007)

PROPERTY & SECURITY MANAGEMENT

Alleged threat to kill Erap probed

AUTHORITIES ARE LOOKING INTO REPORTS that certain groups, including communist guerrillas, may try to assassinate deposed president Joseph Estrada and pin the blame on the government, the country's top military official said Friday.

Estrada, who is under house arrest and on trial for corruption six years after a military-backed "people power" revolt ended his rule, remains a major political force in the country.

"We are now trying to validate reports that certain groups may try to harm the former leader and blame it on the government," Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon told reporters.

Esperon said authorities were taking seriously reports that the communist New People's Army may try and "harm the former president."

But the Communist Party of the Philippines, whose 7,000-member New People's Army has been waging a nearly 40-year Maoist guerrilla campaign, denied any role in the supposed plot to kill Estrada.

The supposed plot "is pure hogwash," rebel spokesperson Gregorio 'Ka Roger' Rosal said in a statement.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales claimed yesterday that CPP founder Jose Ma. Sison wanted President Macapagal-Arroyo, Estrada and anticommunist officials in the Cabinet assassinated before the end of the elections.

Gonzales, who said he was also on the list of targets, claimed that Sison wants to retaliate against the government for discrediting the communist front organizations in Congress.

"We consider this to be a very serious threat...it is time-bound. Joma Sison wants us dead before the election is over. In some of the documents we have captured, the communist movement has analyzed that they lost 50 percent of the votes for their front organizations because of my campaign against the front organizations of the CPP-NPA during the last election."

Gonzales said intelligence authorities believe that Sison was plotting to recreate a Plaza Miranda-type bombing incident to sow chaos in the elections.

He said he obtained the intelligence report from the police less than a month ago.

But despite the threat of an assassination, Gonzales saw no need to restrict the President's movements. "Threats to the President are constant, we can only add on to the measures but we cannot restrict the activities of the President," said Gonzales.

On the threat to Estrada, Gonzales reckoned that the communists could be aiming for his sons such as Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and not him. "I have told the former President, please take this seriously, this has nothing to do with our partisan politics, This has something to do with the security," said Gonzales.

Estrada is being held on house arrest at a family-owned resort in Tanay, Rizal, beside the headquarters of a Philippine Army division.

Aside from the President and Estrada, Gonzales said the names on the communist hit list include himself, Esperon, former Gen. Jovito Palparan and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. *AFP with a report from Gil C. Cabacungan, Jr.*

SC orders Smith, Cabinet men to answer petition

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS ordered American soldier and convicted rapist Daniel Smith and several cabinet secretaries to comment on the petition seeking the serviceman's return to the Makati City Jail.

Asked for their responses were Smith, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol, Court of Appeals Justice Apolinario Bruselas and the Special 16th Division of the appellate court.

The resolution was issued because of a petition filed by former Senators Jovito Salonga and Wigberto Tañada, Makati judge Benjamin Pozon, who tried and convicted Smith and Harry Roque, Florin Hilbay, Jose de la Rama and Emilio Capulong.

The petitioners had asked the high court to invalidate the agreement signed by Romulo and US Ambassador Kristie Kenney, wherein the two parties agreed on Smith's detention at the US Embassy.

The petitioners claimed that the agreement was not binding and questioned why the Court of Appeals Special 16th Division, led by Bruselas, declared the issue of where Smith should be detained as moot.

P10,000-plate dinner for Loren a big hit

By Nancy Carvajal

THE SURE WINNER GETS THE BETS.

With poll surveys consistently placing her on top, former Sen. Loren Legarda drew top businessmen, socialites, former top government officials and show biz personalities to her P10,000-per-plate fundraising dinner on Thursday to jumpstart her senatorial bid.

"This is a gathering of Loren's friends and supporters from way back 1998," said Monica Aveo, head of the Loren Forever Movement which spearheaded the affair following Legarda's filing of candidacy for senator at the Commission on Elections.

Legarda, who is running under the National People's coalition "opposition wing," has consistently topped the surveys for senatorial candidates in the coming national and local elections in May.

Legarda, a television broadcaster before she entered politics, topped the senatorial contest in 1998.

The fundraising dinner, held at a Chinese restaurant of Century Park Sheraton Hotel, consisted of winter melon with scallop soup, assorted cold cuts, fried breaded seafood roll, black mushroom with avalon mushroom, steamed fish, steamed prawns in garlic sauce, roasted chicken, and fried noodles.

Dessert was mixed Chinese pastries and sago mixed with strips of jackfruit in coconut milk.

According to Aveo, based on the occupied tables the number of guests at the dinner reached more than a thousand.

She said at least 100 tables were set up at the restaurant's huge function room which could seat 12 people per table.

In her speech during a brief program, Legarda acknowledged the presence of members of her family and school mates from Assumption College.

Among the businessmen present were Miguel Varela, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry chair emeritus; Jorge Siy, president of the Confederation of Garments Exporters of the Philippines; and Roy Chua, director of the supermarkets association.

Also present were Sen. Franklin Drilon, former Secretary of Finance Jose Pardo and former Sen. Freddie Webb.

Dolorfino peace mission with MNLF to continue –Esperon

By Dona Pazzibugan

MAJ. GEN. BEN MOHAMMAD DOLORFINO will continue to conduct peace missions with the Moro National Liberation Front despite the near-hostage crisis last weekend, according to Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

Esperon said the military was prepared to act had the situation last weekend deteriorated into hostage-taking but stressed he never doubted that Dolorfino was safe with the MNLF.

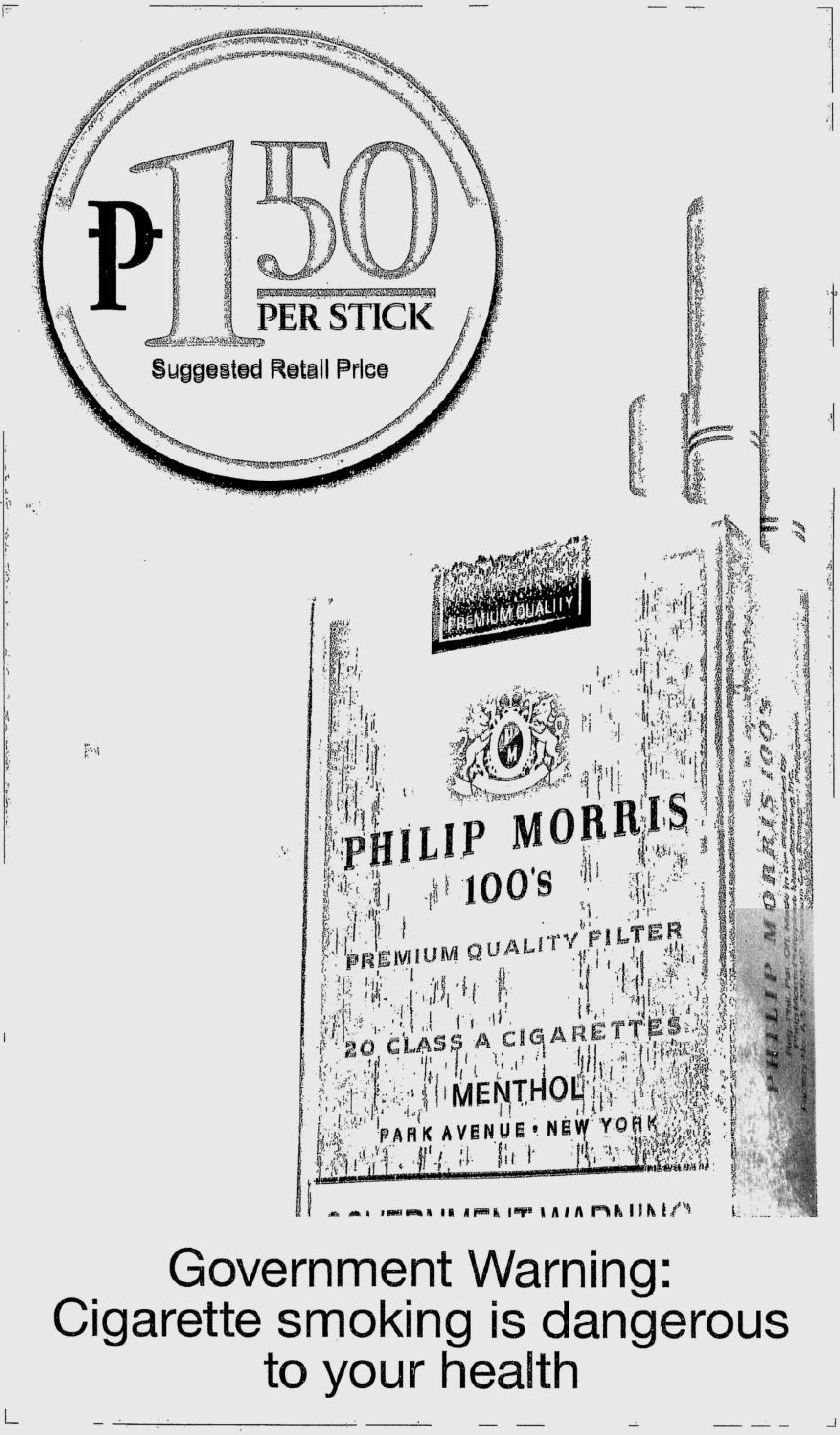
"As far as I'm concerned, my mission for him stays. I will continue to give him missions in connection with the peace process, in Sulu especially," said Esperon, who spoke to reporters for the first time about the incident.

Dolorfino, a Muslim convert, is a long-time military negotiator with the MNLF, the main Muslim insurgency which signed a peace pact with the government in 1996, as well as the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

He and Ramon Santos, the undersecretary for the peace process, and 19 members of their team were held and prevented from leaving the MNLF's camp in Bitan-ag, Panamao, Sulu, for two days from Feb. 2 to 4.

They were allowed to leave only after MNLF commander Ustadz Kabier Malik was assured that the tripartite meeting between the Philippine government, the MNLF and the Organization of Islamic Conference would push through next month in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The AFP chief said that though he considered what happened to Dolorfino and his team as a "dialogue under duress," his planning and orders to field commanders during the crisis were based on a hostage situation.



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Villar key to Wednesday Group decision

From page A1

sides (opposition and administration), which is really impossible. He is doing a balancing act, and that's the problem."

Aside from Villar, the other members of the Wednesday Group, Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Senators Ralph Recto and Joker Arroyo met last night at Le Souffle in Rockwell, Makati City. On Thursday night, they met with Vice President Noli de Castro at the latter's office.

But they failed to reach a consensus on the option that they would take, whether as a group or individually.

The source told the INQUIRER De Castro did not take part in last night's meeting.

The source also said after the meeting that another factor in the discussions was funding and organization.

"For radio and TV advertisement alone, they've computed that it would cost P90 million for each senator. They said they needed at least P150 million each for a 45-day campaign period," the source added.

Before last night's meeting, Pangilinan said three of them had agreed to run under "a common ticket" but one was not sold on the idea—thus the need for further dialogue on the matter before the Monday deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacy.

Recto said he and his colleagues were deciding between running as independent candidates and joining a ticket with a machinery.

He said they would eventually find a middle ground.

Stalemate

"We have failed to reach an agreement as a group at this time. It's a stalemate. We have agreed that we will continue to try and ensure that, until the deadline of filing, our decision as a group will be unanimous," Pangilinan said in a text message sent midnight Thursday.

"At this point three of the four have agreed to run under a common ticket, and one of us remains unconvinced," he said but did not name names.

"In the meantime, we all agreed to withhold our respective decisions on where we are to align ourselves," Pangilinan said.

Speaking on condition on anonymity, one of them said they intended to announce their decision as a group.

The same source said that Villar was not comfortable in joining the United Opposition (UNO), contrary to reports, and that Recto and Arroyo would likely join him in the same ticket.

The source said Pangilinan had a predicament in that he was insisting on running as an independent candidate but, at the same time, did not want to lose the others' company.

Another source said that Recto joined President Macapagal-Arroyo's party, the Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kampi), two weeks ago, and that Joker Arroyo was already "in" the administration ticket.

But Recto and Pangilinan vehemently denied these two points.

"No, that's not true," Recto said.

Said Pangilinan: "There's no truth to all of that."

Of the four members of the Wednesday Group, only Villar has consistently declared that he would run under the UNO coalition or a third force.

SURPRISE! Himself a candidate for GenSan mayor, Manny Pacquiao puts in an unexpected appearance at the proclamation party on Friday of Prospero Pichay (back, standing) as a senatorial candidate. Speaker De Venecia is at right. *(Story on Page A8.)* JOAN BONDOC

Pangilinan and Recto have indicated that they might run as independent candidates.

According to sources, Arroyo is inclined to join the administration.

The group's announcement is awaited by both UNO and the administration, which had been wooing any or all of its members to complete their respective slates.

Administration officials had indicated that Recto and Arroyo were a shoo-in for the Team Unity ticket, but Recto denied this.

Still, Speaker Jose de Venecia said yesterday that Recto had accepted Ms Arroyo's invitation for him to join the Team Unity ticket.

"Senator Recto will be running as part of the coalition," De Venecia said at a press conference in Forbes Park, Makati, but added that the next 48 hours would be "fluid."

He said leaders of the administration coalition were to meet last night and early today to finalize the senatorial slate, for announcement "as early as Saturday or, at the latest, Sunday."

Villar, president of the Nacionalista Party and a real estate magnate who is eyeing the presidency in 2010, appeared to be open-minded about the possibility that he and his colleagues might go separate ways in the midterm elections, but only "politically."

Pangilinan, national chair of the Liberal Party, said the group was studying whether to run under a common ticket of the Wednesday Group or of a bigger, complete ticket.

Credibility problem

"Both are being discussed as possibilities," he said in a text message before last night's meeting.

Asked which was more viable, he said: "We're looking at both."

Recto, a party mate of Villar, said it would be ideal for them to run as independent candidates in view of the "credibility problem" of both Ms Arroyo and the camp of ousted President and UNO leader Joseph Estrada.

However, he said, they had to weigh this against the more practical option of running under a ticket with a well-oiled machinery, and find a compromise.

"If, for example, we'll announce that we will run as an independent bloc, that's good because we'll get headlines possibly in the INQUIRER, Star or the tabloids. After that, we file our certificates and then on Tuesday, we start campaigning. But where will we campaign? In the coffee shops?" Recto said over radio dzBB.

He added: "Remember, there are 400,000 precincts, 45,000 barangays, 1,500 municipalities, 80 provinces, 7,100 islands. So how do we campaign [when] there's only four of us? We can form the LP-NP coalition ... but can we go around the 30 million hectares in 90 days?

"As I've said, there's a compromise in everything. You're aware of the ideal issue on one end, and the pragmatic issue [on the other] end."

Sure thing

Estrada's wife, Sen. Luisa Ejercito, said she was certain that Villar would stick with UNO.

"What I know is that Villar is with UNO. I'm very sure he's with UNO. And so is Pangilinan, unless he changes his mind," she said in an interview.

Ejercito said the group of actress Susan Roces, which was reportedly opposed to Pangilinan's inclusion in the coalition, was not involved in the selection process.

Pangilinan is famous as "Mr. Noted," the co-presiding officer who simply noted objections of the opposition during the canvassing of the results of the 2004 presidential election.

Roces is the widow of the actor Fernando Poe Jr., the opposition standard-bearer who lost to Ms Arroyo.

LP president Sen. Franklin Drilon and his party mate, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, ruled out the possibility that Pangilinan would run under the administration ticket, and expressed the belief that he would run under UNO or as an independent candidate.

"If you have the popularity of [Pangilinan] and have [singer-actress] Sharon [Cuneta] by your side, you're viable [as an independent candidate]. Besides, the LP political machinery will be working for him," Drilon said in an interview.

According to Drilon and Biazon, the LP will back Pangilinan regardless of the ticket he joins, as well as Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, another party member who has been drafted by the UNO.

Gonzalez's vote

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez told reporters that not all of the administration's senatorial candidates could count on his vote.

He said he would disregard those candidates who were earlier critical of Ms Arroyo but later scrambled to join her ticket.

He specifically named former Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III.

Gonzalez said he accepted the administration's position on recruiting people who used to be in the opposition, but pointed out that he was not required to support all of them.

"As I said, I cannot accept people who have inflicted so much harm and pain on the President. There are people who benefited from [her] support in 2004 and bit the hand that fed them afterwards. We will not support them," he said.

But he added that he had no problem with Sen. Edgardo Angara, who, he said, had not criticized the President very much. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Leila B. Salaverria*

PUNO: Out of the Cabinet and into the House. INQUIRER PHOTO FILE

Puno leaving Cabinet; urged to lead Kampi in House

By Norman Bordadora

INTERIOR SECRETARY RONALDO PUNO yesterday confirmed that he would leave President Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet to reclaim his old seat in the House of Representatives.

Puno will be a major factor in the House if Malacañang is called upon to fend off a third impeachment attempt against Ms Arroyo.

With top opposition leaders like House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano running for Senate seats in the May elections, the United Opposition is scrambling to put 79 anti-Arroyo lawmakers in the House for an impeachment complaint to be automatically transmitted to the Senate.

According to one source, it was family members who prevailed upon Puno to go back to Congress. But another said members of Ms Arroyo's party, the Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kampi), had been egging him on.

"There are already 53 Kampi members in the House. There are 17 more expected to join the party just before the start of the local campaign period. It will be good for the party to have Secretary Puno leading them," the second source said.

"He might give [Jose] De Venecia a run for the speakership," the source added.

"My family wants me to go back to Congress [as representative of the first district of Antipolo]. I would no longer be a neophyte, so my contributions could be more significant," Puno said in a text message.

"The tea leaves seem to be pointing me there. The President might find me more useful in the House," he added.

Earlier in the day, sources close to Puno told the INQUIRER that Ms Arroyo's reputed political tactician would soon resign from the Department of Interior and Local Government to seek reelection in the House.

Puno said he planned to make a formal announcement of his decision by the end of the month.

When Puno left the House in 2006 to take the top post at the DILG, he said that the move was temporary and that he was looking forward to returning to his constituency by the next election.

RP now int'l test center ...

From page A1

(NCLEX), a key requirement for nurses wanting to work in the United States.

Secretary Dante Ang, head of a presidential lobby group for the NCLEX, got the good news during a crucial meeting with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) in Chicago, according to his staff.

Ang had gone to the United States to lobby for the Philippine application to be an NCLEX site.

Two former presidents of the Philippine Nurses Association—Marilyn Yap and George Cordero—yesterday confirmed that the application had been approved, saying it showed that the leakage scandal was "finally over."

"It's time to move forward," Yap, whose term ended last month, told the INQUIRER.

Ang, who concurrently heads the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, was not available for comment as of press time. His staff said he was still in the United States.

Staffer Jenny Gonzales confirmed to the INQUIRER that the Ang mission had, indeed, been successful.

"We got it!" she quoted her boss as telling her over the phone earlier yesterday.

Distinguished company

Yap said the designation of the Philippines as an NCLEX testing site would greatly favor local nurses since they would no longer have to take the exam overseas. Every year, around 9,000 Filipino nurses apply for the NCLEX.

Cordero, who was himself implicated in the leakage scandal but denied any involvement, said an applicant usually needed around $1,000 to take the NCLEX in Hong Kong.

International testing centers include the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Australia, Mexico, India, South Korea and Taiwan.

Yap said the Philippines' inclusion in this distinguished company would boost the country's image in the international community, especially in the light of the leakage controversy.

Not a few nursing officials earlier expressed fear that the scandal might blow the country's chances of becoming an NCLEX site.

Cordero said the approval of the application essentially "vindicated" the Philippines from the negative image brought about by the scandal.

"The stigma is over," he told the INQUIRER. "This is vindication on the part of the Philippines."

Although the Philippines is now an NCLEX site, there could still be some concern about the chances of Filipino nurses seeking slots in the American nursing profession.

In October last year, the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) announced that it would not yet approve applications for VisaScreen from members of the June 2006 batch.

The VisaScreen refers to the program offered by the CGFNS' International Commission on Healthcare Professions that helps foreign health care professionals qualify for certain occupational visas.

No word from CGFNS

The CGFNS said it would first determine "whether the licensure process followed in light of the challenged results of the June 2006 exam is comparable with that required for nurses licensed in America, as required by US law."

It does so by "verifying and evaluating their credentials to ensure that they meet the government's minimum eligibility standards."

The CGFNS provides the certification exam usually required by many American states before foreign nurses could take the NCLEX.

There's still no word from the CGFNS whether it has approved or denied the applications for VisaScreen.

JV: It's a little sacrifice to make

SPEAKING OF POLITICAL MOVEments, San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito said he had pulled out of the senatorial race with a heavy heart.

Ejercito, a son of deposed President Joseph Estrada, said the decision was "hard on [his] part" but was a "sacrifice" made to unite the opposition and to dispel allegations that his family was power-greedy.

"It is with deep regret that I make this sacrifice in order to pursue higher ideals and aspirations," Ejercito said yesterday at a press conference in San Juan.

"I am withdrawing to give way to those senatorial aspirants lured into joining the administration ticket. I also hope this would junk the alleged third force," he said.

On Thursday, Estrada announced that he had asked his son to withdraw from the senatorial ticket of the United Opposition (UNO) and instead seek reelection in the family bailiwick of San Juan.

Ejercito said that his father made the request on Wednesday and that he agreed immediately.

"In no time, I approved of his request despite my plans of continuing what he had left. It was a relatively little sacrifice compared to what he has done for our family," said the 37-year-old mayor.

Sonia Roco, widow of the former senator and presidential candidate Raul Roco, appears to be in line for Ejercito's slot in the UNO slate.

Welcome change

Makati Mayor and UNO president Jejomar Binay welcomed the change in the coalition's senatorial lineup and took it as a positive development.

He said that while Ejercito's withdrawal came as the UNO slate was still incomplete, the move would strengthen the opposition.

"The surveys have consistently shown Mayor JV among the leading candidates for the Senate. He is also highly qualified. Yet Mayor JV has decided to yield his slot in the interest of further strengthening the grand coalition of opposition parties and civil society groups," Binay said, adding:

"We thank Mayor JV and wish him well."

Binay also said Ejercito's withdrawal from the UNO slate was "a decision" of the Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino and the Estrada family.

"UNO respects the decision," he said.

Binay said Ejercito's withdrawal proved UNO's point:

"We are a united coalition of parties and organizations. We are united by our conviction. The higher interest of forming a broad united front against the illegitimate regime of [Ms Arroyo] takes precedence over personal interests." *Reports from Emman Cena and Tarra Quismundo*

National pols' party-hopping confuses ...

From page A1

city development plan, and what is important is to [institute] ordinances and legislate laws [for its implementation]," he said.

Braganza was press secretary and agrarian reform secretary before he sought and won the mayoralty of Alaminos in 2004.

Braganza, who once belonged to a group of young congressmen known as the "Spice Boys," said he could not even promise that he would vote for the administration's senatorial slate.

"Maybe it will be chop suey (a mix of candidates with various political leanings). I will just vote for my friends," he said.

Braganza also said he was volunteering to be part of the campaign team of his friends—Ms Arroyo's former chief of staff Michael Defensor, Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri and Sorsogon Rep. Francis Escudero.

He said he would also support Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers if the latter would decide to run for senator.

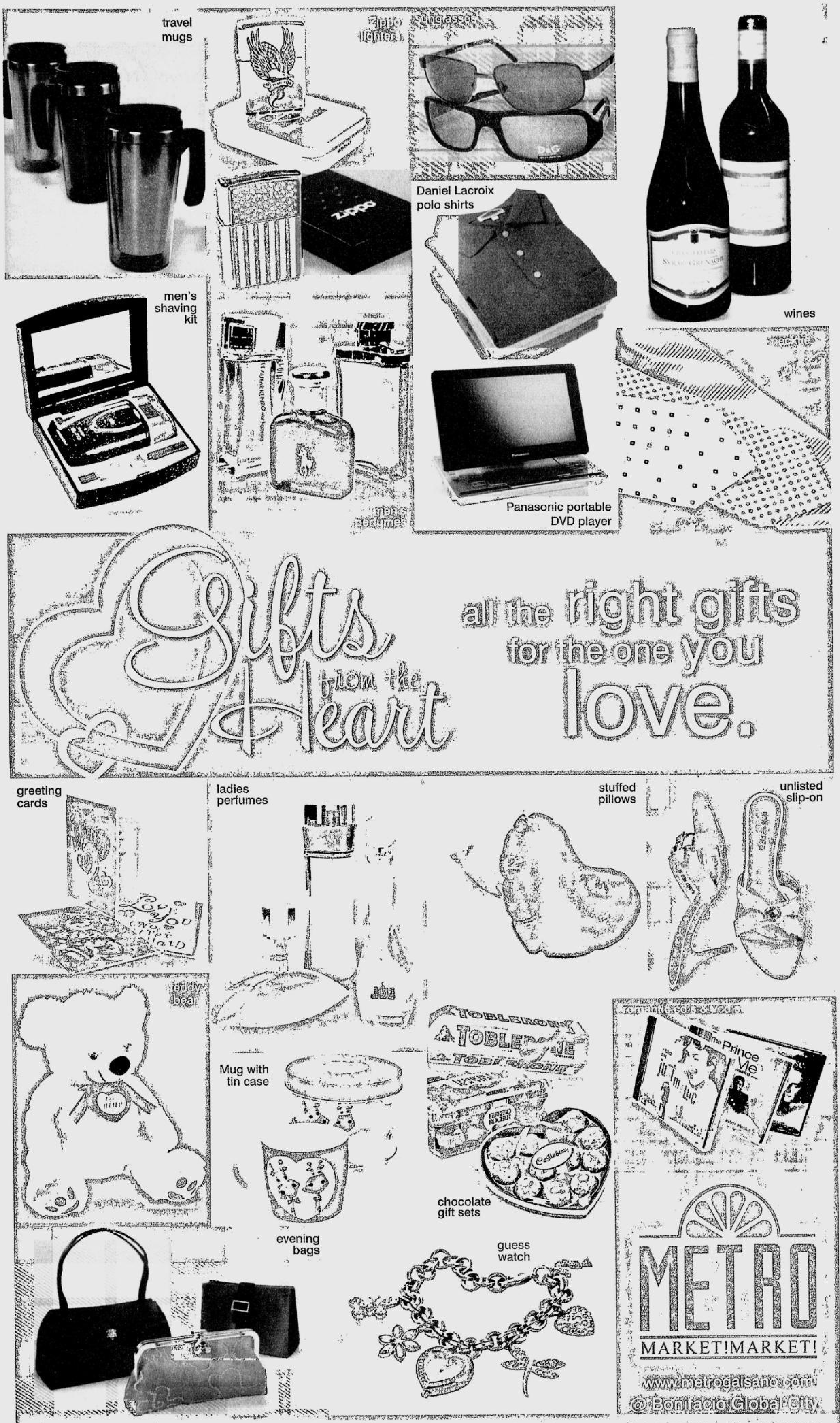
"These young legislators who want to become senators should be given a chance as they are not lacking in experience," he said.

Braganza also said he was not turning his back on his city and promised to help choose candidates for the local elections.

"I told them that even if I'm not in politics, I will still help my city. I never stopped helping my city even when I was in the Cabinet," he said.

Braganza said another reason for his decision to retire from politics was his desire to spend more time with his family.

"I started early in politics. I've been a student leader, a rebel, a councilor, a congressman twice, a Cabinet member and a mayor. I've been in public service for 25 years. I want to spend the next 20 years with my family," he said.



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Pichay opens bid with slogan, 'Itanim sa Senado,' and Pacquiao by his side

By Michael Lim Ubac

TABLOID PUBLISHER-TURNED POLITICIAN Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. of Surigao del Sur yesterday formally declared his bid for a Senate seat in the coming May elections.

Pichay, one of the staunchest ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo, adopted the catchy campaign slogan, "Itanim sa Senado" (Plant in the Senate), apparently in reference to the vegetable *petsay* (pak choi), a widely-used ingredient in Filipino dishes.

"So we need to bring back the true essence of a Filipino by planting Pichay into the Senate," he said.

With no less than boxing world champion Manny Pacquiao by his side, Pichay appeared to be on Cloud 9 as he profusely thanked fellow administration allies and supporters for their support at a restaurant in Quezon City.

"This is phenomenal," said an ecstatic Pichay. "Imagine, a world champion attending the launching of my candidacy. I'm the only candidate endorsed so far by Pacquiao. He's a real friend."

Pacquiao had dropped unannounced to show support for Pichay, a fellow cockfighting aficionado.

As a show of force, members and officials of Lakas-CMD led by Speaker Jose de Venecia, House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte, and allies from President Arroyo's party, the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino, joined in raising Pichay's hands.

Pichay was the first senatorial aspirant of the yet-to-be completed "Team Unity" ticket of the administration to be formally declared by the ruling coalition.

Pichay told the crowd that he had formally accepted President Arroyo's offer to be part of the administration coalition's unity ticket.

"I thank her for the faith and trust in me and the opportunity to seek higher office, so I could continue public service and pursue the administration's pro-people, pro-development agenda."

He said he was "deeply honored" to be part of the administration which "is committed to carry on the President's agenda of economic and political stability, good governance and social payback."

Pichay, the vice chair of the Commission on Appointments, said while he had qualms about joining the administration senatorial slate before because of the inclusion of some erstwhile opposition members, "in the end I have to think of the greater good of joining the Unity Ticket."

"The bottom line is, as the candidates of the administration coalition, we should all adhere to the President's programs and agenda for the country. That has been the President's appeal to her candidates," said Pichay.

Pichay said his platform would also highlight livelihood, education, disaster management and environment, alternative energy resources, defense and national security, and youth and sports development which, he said, had been his advocacies since he became a member of the House of Representatives in the 11th Congress.

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1N HKG + 2N Shenzhen		89	1N Shenzhen + 1N HKG + 1N Macau	189
Singapore	3N	119	Saigon 3D/2N	199
Kuala Lumpur	3N	129	Brunei free & easy 3D/2N	229
JAKARTA	3N	138	1N Macau + 2N HKG + 2N Shenzhen	288
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06Apr-08Apr 3D/2N	319	379

Bangkok 04Apr-08Apr 5D/4N
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2N Bkk + 3N Brunei 5D/4N	275	4-City 5D/4N	359	Wonders of Egypt 9D/8N	1630
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Jalosjos launches party-list group to support prisoners

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE KAKUSA (KAPATIRAN NG mga naKulong na walang Sala) party-list group, whose chairman emeritus is convicted child rapist and former Zamboanga del Norte Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, has been given the go-signal to participate in the May 14 elections by the Commission on Elections.

Kakusa, a four-year-old organization representing 100,000 prisoners languishing in jails across the country, will try to win a seat in Congress and press for judicial and penal reforms.

The party-list group will push for programs catering to the needs of the families of prisoners, who, according to Jalosjos are the "real victims of a skewed judicial system."

"It has been our long-time dream to form a group that will represent us in government and attend to the families of inmates, especially the poor ones," Jalosjos told the INQUIRER in an interview.

Family members of convicted persons, who number about half-a-million, are part of society long overlooked by the government.

These are the spouses who work to put food on the table and at the same time, look after the children.

"The burden of adjustment is not on the inmates but on their families they have left outside," said Jalosjos, who is serving two life terms for statutory rape in the maximum security compound of the NBP.

Inmates, especially members of the Lamb of God Foundation (a nonprofit organization founded by Jalosjos), are working double time on their campaign paraphernalia and strategies.

Since prisoners are stripped of their right to suffrage, members of Kakusa will rely purely on the votes of family members and friends.

The party-list group, represented by its national president R. Dodong Canonigo, will also tap its eight partner non-governmental agencies to help them in the election campaign.

Jalosjos said he would ask help from his friends in politics. He added that if by some "miracle of God," he would be given an absolute pardon and re-acquire his right to vote, he might take Kakusa under his wing.

Meanwhile, core members of the Lamb of God Foundation will meet in the coming days to discuss and draft reforms to improve the penal system.

"We will push for the implementation of better rehabilitation programs for inmates because what we have now is primitive. They just record your fingerprints, give you room and feed you," Jalosjos said.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Metro Iloilo Water District (MIWD), through its Bids and Awards Committee 1 (BAC-1), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Supply and Delivery of Water Meter ½"
Location	MIWD, Bonifacio Drive, Iloilo City
Brief Description	Supply and delivery of 6,000 pieces of water meter ½" (Class B) without tailpiece; meters should be uni-directional
Approved Budget For the Contract	P 2,520,000.00
Delivery Period	2 Staggered Deliveries: 1st Delivery – Minimum of 3,000 pieces w/in 30 days upon receipt of NTP 2nd Delivery – Minimum of 3,000 pieces w/in 45 days upon receipt of NTP

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bids shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations A (IRR-A).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Advertisement	February 10 – 16, 2007
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 19 – 27, 2007
3. Pre-bid Conference	February 28, 2007, 2:00 PM
4. Deadline of Submission and Opening of Bids	March 12, 2007, 2:00 PM
5. Bid Evaluation	March 12, 2007, 2:00 PM

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos Only (P1,500.00)** to the Metro Iloilo Water District's Cashier.

The MIWD assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO J. CABEROY**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee 1 (BAC-1)

(PDI – February 10, 2007)

DepED Form Number: SF-INFR-05
Revised on: June 27, 2005

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **Division of Southern Leyte**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract.

Name of Contract	Proposed Construction of 1 unit, 2CL 7x9m & 2 units, 3 CL 7x9m School Building w/ attached C.R (1x1.2m) w/ Septic Vault (3 45mx2 3m)
Location	Pamigsian Elem. School, Bontoc, Southern Leyte
Brief Description	Interior School, at the top of the mountain
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Php 6,031,250.97
Contract Duration	210 CD

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR)

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and Issuance of Eligibility Forms	February 12, 2007
2. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	February 12-19, 2007
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	February 22, 2007
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 22 to March 1, 2007
5. Pre-Bid Conference	March 5, 2007
6. Receipt and Opening of Bids	March 19, 2007

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at **Division of Southern Leyte, Maasin City**, upon their submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI). Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payments of a non-refundable amount of **Php 6,500.00** to the **Division of Southern Leyte Cashier**.

The **Division of Southern Leyte** assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

FIEL Y. ALMENDRA
BAC Chairman

The BAC Secretariat shall prepare the draft IAEB for approval by the BAC at the pre-procurement conference
(PDI–February 10, 2007)

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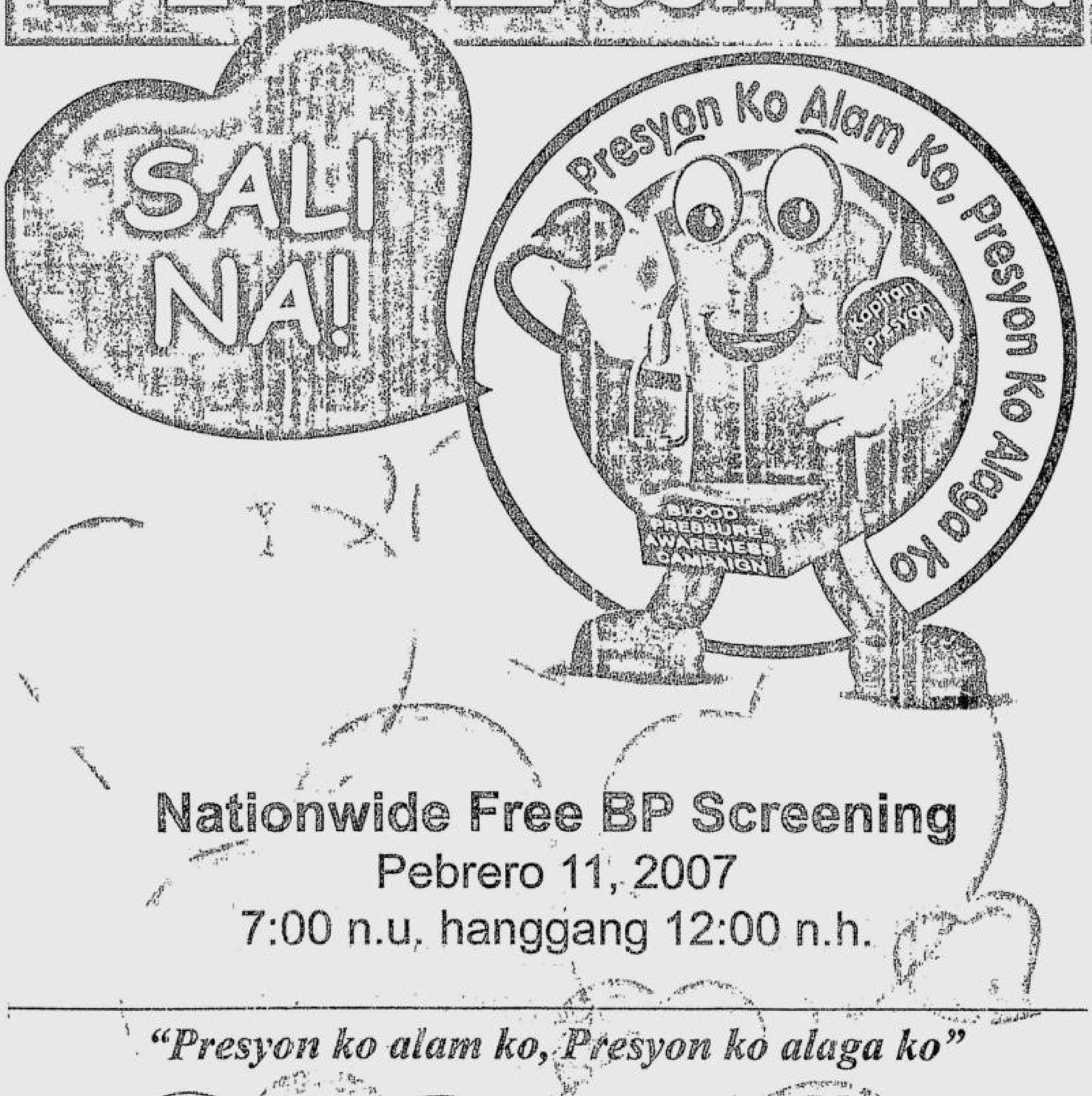
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Wanted: Woman with bulldog, temper

By Nikko Dizon

AIRPORT AUTHORITIES ARE LOOKING FOR the still unidentified woman with a bulldog who was rude to a security officer at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Wednesday night when she was asked to keep her dog inside her vehicle.

"We just want to invite her and talk to her about the incident," said retired general Angel Atutubo, security chief of the Manila International Airport Authority.

The woman, who brandished a Department of Foreign Affairs identification card, allegedly swore at a police officer when the latter asked her to put her dog in her car as it was scaring employees and other passengers.

"She was apparently arrogant for a wife of a diplomat or as a diplomat herself," Atutubo said in Filipino.

In an incident report, Lt. Jaime Estrella said the woman repeatedly swore at him and dared him to produce an order banning pets from the terminal.

Atutubo said he has written the protocol office of the DFA for assistance in tracking down the woman.

The woman, who was using an Isuzu Rodeo with a diplomatic license plate 24266, insisted on having her bulldog, which was on leash, with her while she waited to meet an elderly male passenger at the arrival curbside of the Naia Terminal 1 on Wednesday night.

When Estrella asked her to leave her dog in the vehicle for "security reasons," as it was scaring other people inside the terminal, the woman became abusive.

A bulldog, a small animal with a muscular body, short legs and a large square-shaped face, can become quite fierce. Its large lower jaw has given it its reputation of the "locking jaw" mechanism, that is, its grip is very powerful against resistance.

The dog apparently remained silent the entire time that its presence at the airport was being debated.

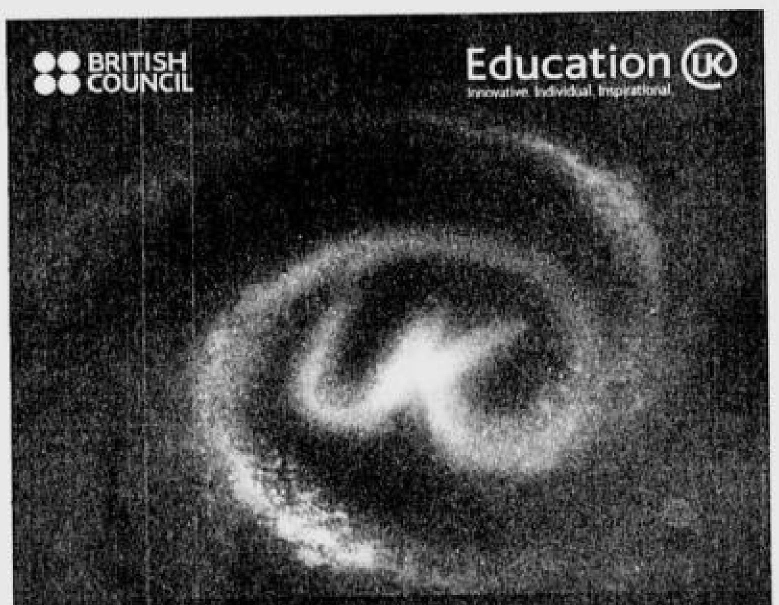
Sources at the airport said there was no clear MIAA regulation against bringing pets to the airport.

But they noted that the Naia being a restricted facility, pets should be banned there.

In his report, Estrella recommended that a memorandum on the restriction of dogs at the Naia be immediately issued to avoid similar incidents.

Atutubo insists that there are regulations against pets at the airport.

"People cannot bring pets to the airport," he said.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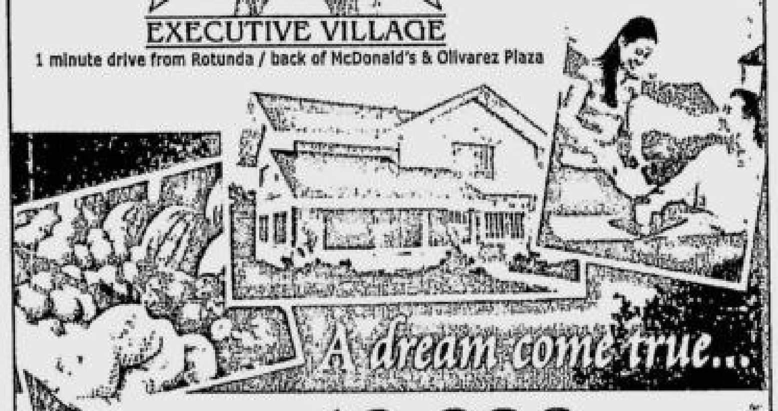
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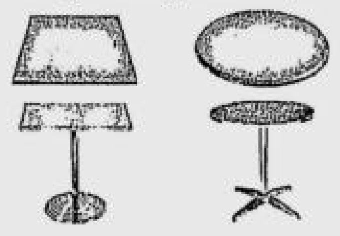
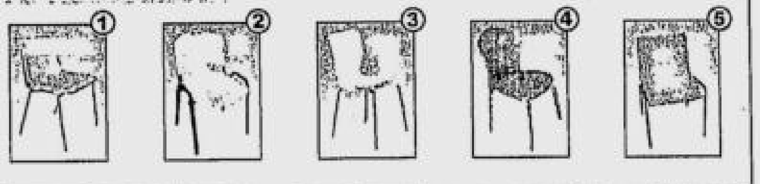

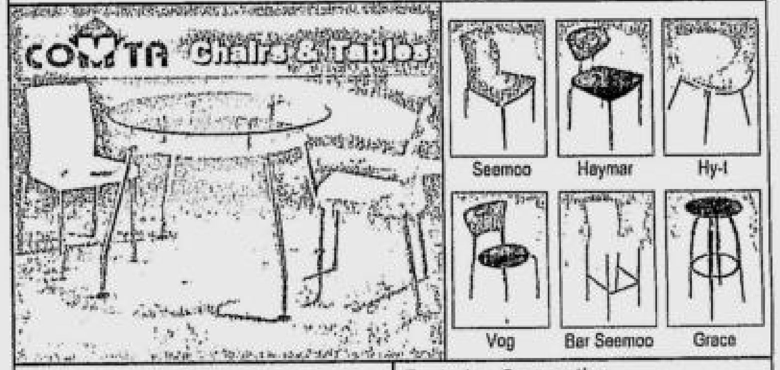
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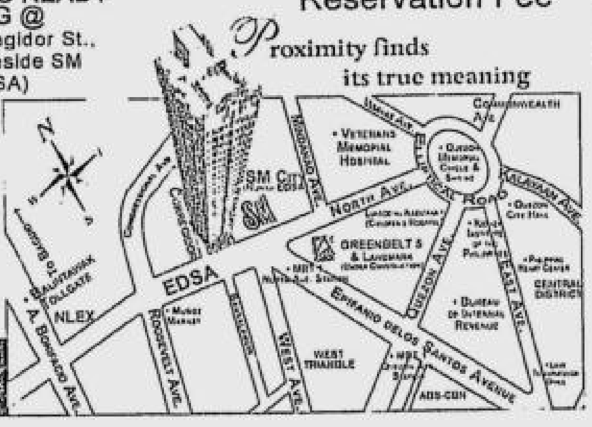
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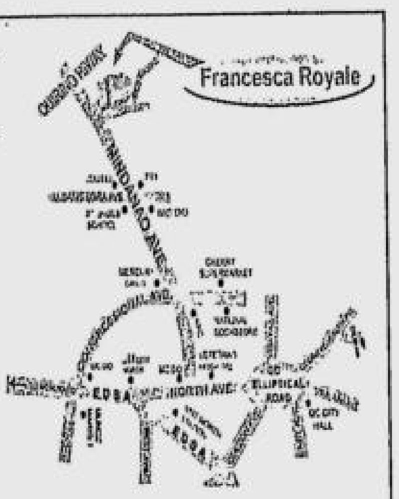
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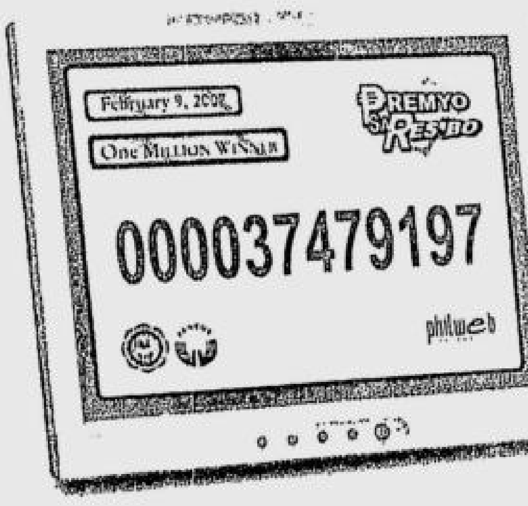

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Draw will be aired on ABC 5 at 10:30pm.
Official Receipts from January 1, 2007 to February 15, 2007 are qualified for this draw.
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Type-in the text message in this format:
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text to 9777 for single entries or
text to 9778 for multiple entries. (Smart and Globe only)
Available to all Smart, Globe and Sun subscribers.
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For inquiries Call 338-9777 or visit www.premyosaresibo.com.ph
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FAMOUS FOR BEING FAMOUS: Smith delights the paparazzi after arriving at a movie prêmier in February, 2005. AP

Anna Nicole Smith, pop-culture icon; 39

From page A1

causes, the findings would likely be announced quickly. He cautioned, however, that definitive results could take weeks.

Pop-culture punchline

Through the '90s and into the new century, Smith was famous for being famous, a pop-culture punchline because of her up-and-down weight, her Marilyn-Monroe looks, her exaggerated curves, her little-girl voice, her ditzy-blonde persona, and her over-the-top revealing outfits.

Recently, she lost a reported 31 kilograms (69 pounds) and became a spokeswoman for TrimSpa, a weight-loss supplement. On her reality show and other recent TV appearances, her speech was often slurred and she seemed out of it. Some critics said she seemed drugged-out.

"Undoubtedly it will be found at the end of the day that drugs featured in her death as they did in the death of poor Daniel," said a former attorney for Smith in the Bahamas, Michael Scott.

Another former Smith attorney, Lenard Leeds, told the celebrity gossip website TMZ that Smith "always had problems with her weight going up and down, and there's no question she used alcohol." He added that it was no secret that "she had a very troubled life" and had "so many, many problems."

'Bunch of nonsense'

Smith attorney Ron Rale said that he had talked to her on Tuesday or Wednesday, and she had flu symptoms and a fever and was still grieving over her son. He dismissed claims her death was related to drugs as "a bunch of nonsense."

"Poor Anna Nicole," he said. "She's been the underdog. She's been besieged ... and she's been trying her best and nobody should have to endure what she's endured."

Smith's son died Sept. 10 in his mother's hospital room in the Bahamas, just days after she gave birth to a daughter.

An American medical examiner hired by the family, Cyril Wecht, said he died accidentally of a combination of methadone and two antidepressants. Last month, a Bahamas magistrate scheduled a formal inquiry into the death for March 27.

Legal complications

Meanwhile, the paternity of Smith's now 5-month-old daughter remained a matter of dispute. The birth certificate lists Dannielynn's father as attorney Howard K. Stern, Smith's most recent companion. Smith's ex-boyfriend Larry Birkhead was waging a legal challenge, saying he was the father. An emergency hearing in the paternity case was scheduled for Friday in Los Angeles.

Lawyers were expected to discuss an emergency motion filed by Birkhead's attorney seeking DNA from Smith's body, Rale said. The reasons for the motion were not immediately clear, but an attorney for Stern, James T. Neavitt, was frustrated.

The legal complications of Smith's estate could take years to unravel, an expert said. Christopher Cline of the law firm Holland and Knight, who is an estate planning specialist, said he has never seen a case "with more moving parts."

Outstanding questions include not only the paternity of her daughter, but if she died with a will and how her death will affect the lawsuit pending against the estate of J. Howard Marshall, the then 89-year-old tycoon she married in 1994. He died the following year.

It also wasn't clear where Smith legally lived when she died.

Dead before 40 like her idol Monroe

LOS ANGELES—ANNA NICOLE SMITH WILL be remembered as the stripper who married an aged oil billionaire and became a pop-culture icon before her life collapsed under the weight of tragedy and legal woes.

The former Playboy model was once seen as one of the world's most desirable women and appeared on the road to supermodel status when she replaced Claudia Schiffer as Guess Jeans model in the early 1990s.

But the platinum-blonde facade crumbled over the course of the next decade as her life unraveled in the full glare of a voracious US tabloid media.

The mysterious sudden death of Smith's son Daniel in the Bahamas just days after the birth of her daughter last September, and her "commitment ceremony" days later with lawyer Howard K. Stern enhanced her notoriety.

Tabloid critics accused her of profiting from her son's death to the tune of around $600,000 after she reportedly sold the last photos of her and her son together to media outlets.

Smith was also embroiled in twin legal actions—a paternity suit from Los Angeles-based photographer Larry Birkhead who claimed Smith's daughter Dannielynn as his own, and a class action case over diet pills she endorsed.

First marriage

Born in Houston, Texas, as Vickie Lynn Hogan in 1967, the young Smith once said she grew up dreaming of being a latter-day Marilyn Monroe.

Like Monroe, she would eventually model for Playboy.

Like Monroe, she would be dead before she was 40.

In her teens she worked as a waitress at a fast-food restaurant where she met and married her first husband, Billy Smith, in 1985 at age 17, giving birth to her son Daniel the same year.

That marriage ended in divorce two years later and after a string of minimum-wage jobs, she turned to work as a stripper in Houston.

63 years her senior

It was during this pėriod that the course of her life was to change irrevocably, when she met and formed a friendship with billionaire oil baron J. Howard Marshall, a man 63 years her senior, in 1991.

As her relationship with Marshall developed, so too did her modeling career. In March 1992 she graced the cover of Playboy for the first time, her bottle blonde hairstyle earning comparisons with her idol Monroe, and she posed nude for the magazine—just as Monroe had done—two months later.

In 1993, she was named Playmate of the Year and secured a contract to model for Guess jeans, appearing in TV commercials, billboards and magazine ads.

Then, on June 27, 1994, she married Marshall, who was 89 at the time, appalling the tycoon's family who would later paint her as a gold-digger out to grab a large slice of the billionaire's fortune.

Smith insisted that she and Marshall were in love, and that they had married for companionship.

Smith vs mogul's family

Marshall's death in August 1995 was the signal for a bitter decade-long legal battle between Smith and the mogul's family, who sought to block her from claiming any of the estate.

Smith was awarded $88 million when the case went to court in 2002 but later saw that judgement reversed by the Circuit Court of Appeal in 2004.

However in 2005 the Supreme Court heard Smith's appeal and ruled unanimously in May 2006 that she had the right to contest the judgement.

At the time of her death Smith was still yet to be granted her share of the fortune. The legal fight was complicated when Marshall's son, E. Pierce Marshall, died suddenly in June last year.

Smith also landed small roles in spoof movies such as "Naked Gun 33 1/3" and "Illegal Aliens" and also had a 2002 reality television series "The Anna Nicole Show" which was a ratings hit initially before it was cancelled in 2004. *AFP*

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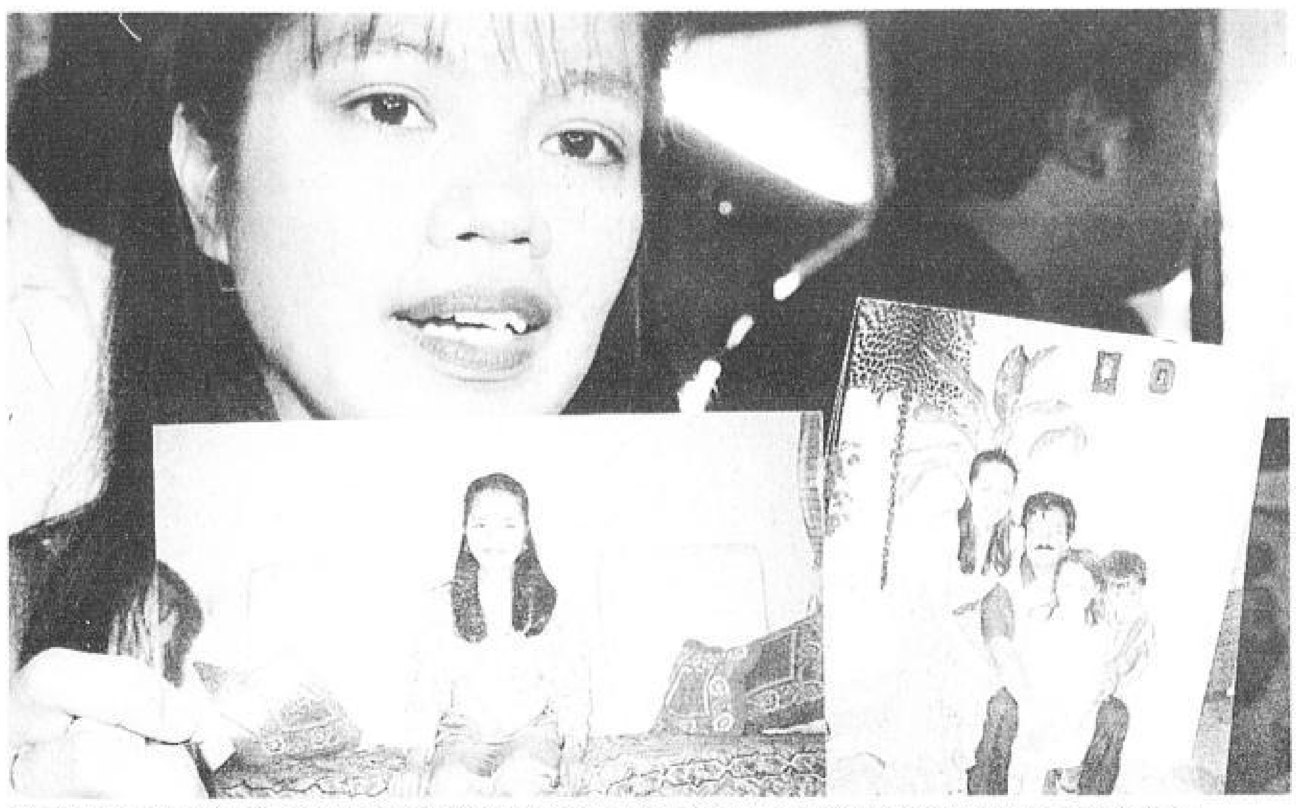


HELP: Jane Gregorio, younger sister of Josiebeth, goes to the DFA on Friday to seek the government's help in negotiating the release of her kidnapped sibling.

AFP

Sis believes kidnapped …

From page A1

Recalling the call as told by Manouch, Gregorio said: "She was ordered to get off her car and made to board a bus, where she was blindfolded. They traveled for about four hours.

"She said they were already on a pump boat (at the time she made the call). Then somebody grabbed the phone. She's been out of (cell phone network) coverage since."

DFA makes distinction

In a press briefing, Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos said Foroozan—originally from San Jose, Mindoro Occidental—might not have been a political target, unlike the previous Filipino hostages, but a victim of a common crime.

Conejos said he had to make this "distinction" to dispel "any apprehension created by the series of events that Filipinos were being targeted" for abduction in the oil-rich African state.

A police matter

But Conejos conceded that this was merely "my assessment," given the limited information reaching the Philippine government regarding Foroozan.

Conejos said the DFA, through the Philippine Embassy in Abuja, could not confirm "second-hand" reports reaching Manila earlier in the day saying that Foroozan may already be dead.

"All facts (so far gathered indicate) that this is a police case, as distinguished from a national security case, like those of the 24 Filipino seamen and the engineer," Conejos said in a media briefing.

He was referring to the Jan. 20 incident where the all-Filipino crew members of German-listed cargo vessel Baco Liner II were held captive by militants operating in Warri, Niger Delta; and the Feb. 6 abduction of Winston Helera, an engineer subcontracting for oil giant Shell, also in Port Harcourt. Militants were also believed to be behind Helera's kidnapping.

Only one call

The Baco crew members were being held allegedly by members of the Movement of the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

Foroozan has been a resident of Port Harford for the past 17 years and married to an Iranian businessman, Conejos said.

"This Filipina has nothing to do with oil interests," he stressed.

Her abductors have since contacted her husband only once, on Wednesday night, Conejos said, reading from an embassy report to the DFA.

'We have your wife'

"There was no demand made but (the call) was just to say that 'we have your wife'."

Conejos said government efforts to save all 26 Filipino hostages through peaceful, diplomatic means would be "the same" whether the abductions were a national security or a police matter.

Last month, after the abduction of the 24 seamen, the DFA appealed to the Nigerian government not to resort to a military solution of the hostage crisis.

Conejos noted that of the 121 foreigners abducted in Nigeria last year, only seven were Filipinos.

Even the recent capture of the 24 seafarers could be considered "accidental" since they were not actually workers based in Nigeria, their vessel merely passing through Nigerian waters, he said.

UN rapporteur on executions here tomorrow

By Christine O. Avendano

A UNITED NATIONS TEAM IS ARRIVING IN Manila tomorrow to look into extrajudicial killings perpetrated in the country, with government officials saying they were duty-bound to provide assistance.

The arrival of the team led by Philip Alston, Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, prompted the Cabinet cluster on national security to meet yesterday to discuss the "implications" of the visit, according to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Gonzalez said that Alston's team would be here for 17 days conducting an investigation into the killings.

"I suppose that is their purpose—to check, to find out who has the accurate report (on the extrajudicial killings)," Gonzalez said, calling attention to the disparity between the accounts of extrajudicial killings as reported by the police-created Task Force Usig and the leftists rights group, Karapatan.

Gonzalez said that he was personally "not happy" about the team's purpose because he did not want "too much interference in my country."

"But since the President said this is a policy—to be transparent—we have to support it," he told reporters after emerging from the national security cluster meeting led by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Gonzalez disclosed that the consensus of the cluster was "to cooperate with them."

The Department of Foreign Affairs sent letters last week to the European Union and other European countries asking technical assistance in helping facilitate the work of the "Melo Commission," tasked to investigate the extrajudicial killings of journalists and political activists.

The UN team will spend 50 to 70 percent of its time meeting with civil society groups and other groups outside of government, according to National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales.

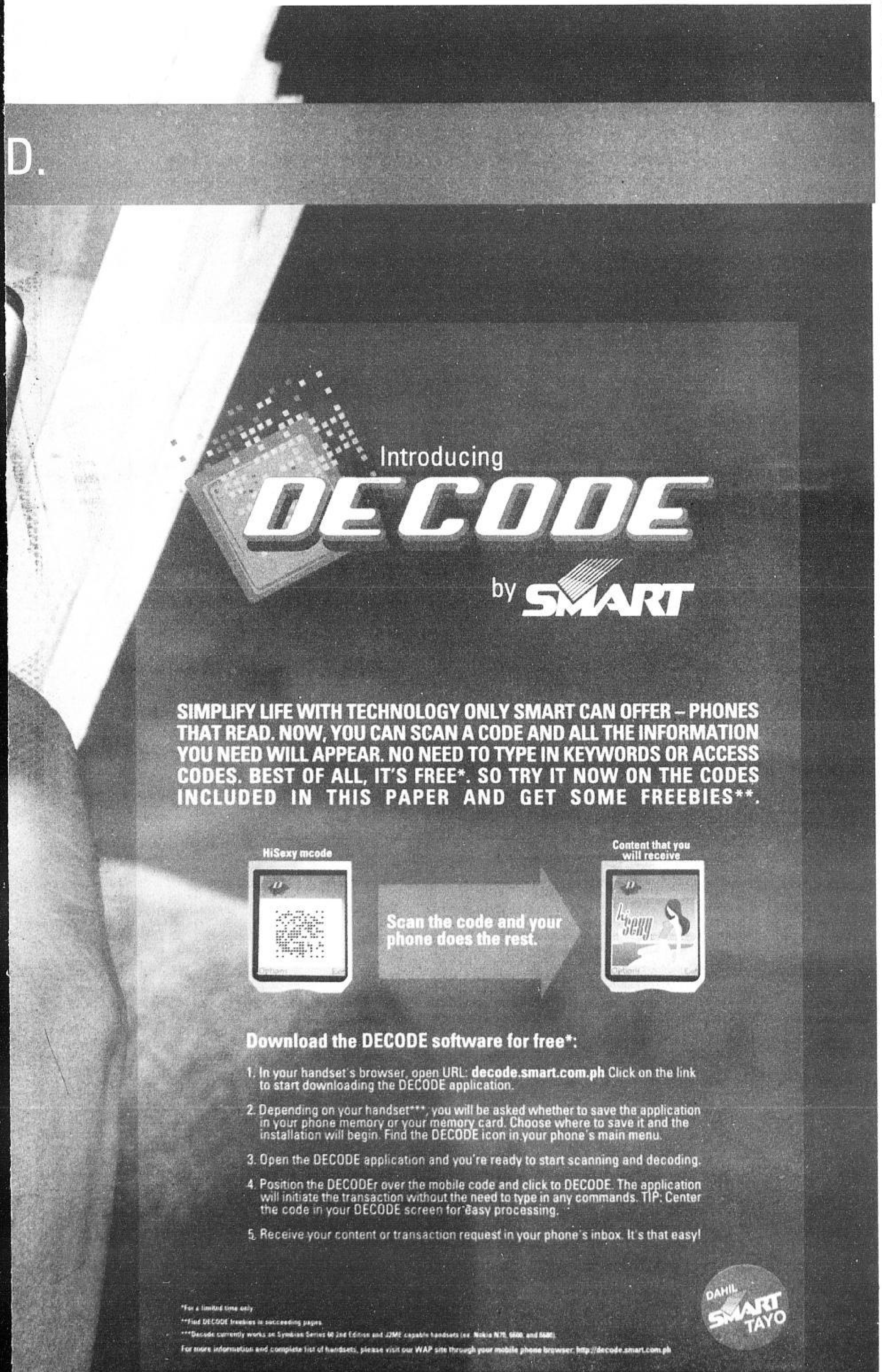
"And really the attitude of the government really is to give the Rapporteur as much free hand on who he wishes to see in the Philippines. We're only there to help him and if he needs any briefings from government, we will give him that briefing. But otherwise he is free," Gonzales said.

The justice secretary, meanwhile, said the UN team will be accompanied by representatives of the DFA and would meet President Arroyo on Tuesday.

He added that members of the Cabinet cluster were worried that the UN team might not be able to present a fair and accurate report. "If you don't handle this properly and they get so many inputs ... which are not correct, that will be one-sided," Gonzalez said.

"We are ready to explain to them, we have enough records to show how many people were sent to mass graves (by the CCP-NPA)," he added.

Gonzalez added that the UN "had been fed" with much disinformation, as he noted a recent move by the opposition to take the libel cases filed against reporters by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo to the UN.



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OPINION

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Dangerous

EDITORIAL

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA WATCHDOGS, AMONG them the US-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) and the Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), are practically one in saying that the Philippines, once touted as having the "freest press in Asia," is now one of the three "most dangerous places for journalists in the world." Even during the darkest days of martial law, the country didn't sink so low in the estimation of international press organizations. Doesn't this bother the Arroyo administration?

Since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001, 49 Filipino journalists have been murdered in a continuing spate of extrajudicial killings that has also claimed the lives of 270 political activists and church leaders. Twenty-five or more than 50 percent of the journalist-victims were killed in the last two years: 10 in 2005, and 13 in 2006. This is not to mention the 25 murder attempts and assaults and 10 arrests that happened last year alone.

Last August, the President ordered, with great fanfare, the Philippine National Police to solve 10 extrajudicial killings (only 291 then by INQUIRER's count, but 820 as of Jan. 25, 2007, according to some activist groups) in 10 weeks. Nine weeks later, PNP Dir. Gen. Oscar Calderon reported that the police had solved 21 cases, four of them related to the killing of journalists. He then assured Ms Arroyo of the PNP's "unrelenting and continuous effort to prevent these incidents from recurring and to arrest and prosecute suspects in the remaining unsolved cases."

In November, President Arroyo assured everyone that the government was "respectful of press freedom, an institution of Philippine democracy." The following month, two more journalists were murdered.

(According to Senior Inspector Henry Q. Libay of PNP's Task Force Usig, the police have filed 70 cases, 21 of which involve media killings. Of the 21, two have led to convictions. It is not clear though how many of these cases have prospered or have been dismissed. The PNP used to consider a case solved with the identification or arrest of a suspect. Libay said the PNP no longer refers to cases as "solved" but "filed.")

Apparently, the extrajudicial killings, a number of which are believed to be the handiwork of military and police operatives, have spawned a culture of impunity, which in turn is abetting more extrajudicial killings. The administration's "inability to act against the murderers" (to borrow the words of RSF) undoubtedly lessens Ms Arroyo's standing and credibility, both in the eyes of the Filipino and in the international community, as a lead crusader in the war against terrorism or as an advocate of democracy in Burma.

"It is one thing to call for an investigation and arrest the suspects, and another to act now to stop the killings," Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño pointed out after the President issued the order to the police. And it does not help at all that her husband, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, holds the record for filing the biggest number of libel suits against the biggest number journalists (40 in all). Those cases are obviously meant to harass and intimidate the media. And it was not a sign of the administration's respect for press freedom when policemen tried to arrest one of the accused media personality right inside Malacañang.

Aside from the direct attacks on members of the press, the administration has shown an aversion to giving the media and the public answers to countless questions about many controversies hounding it, among them, the Hello Garci tapes, the Mayuga Report and the P728-million fertilizer fund scandal. And it was Ms Arroyo who issued Proclamation 1017, which the police took as a cue to shut down the offices of a newspaper known to be very critical of her.

If the media appear to be under siege, Ms Arroyo cannot say, "Don't look at me." She is in a position to prevent or stop the murder and harassment of journalists. She should do more than give deadlines for the police to solve the cases—which are quickly forgotten anyway. Not only because the killings have become an international embarrassment for her administration, but because ultimately they pose a danger to the survival of democracy itself.

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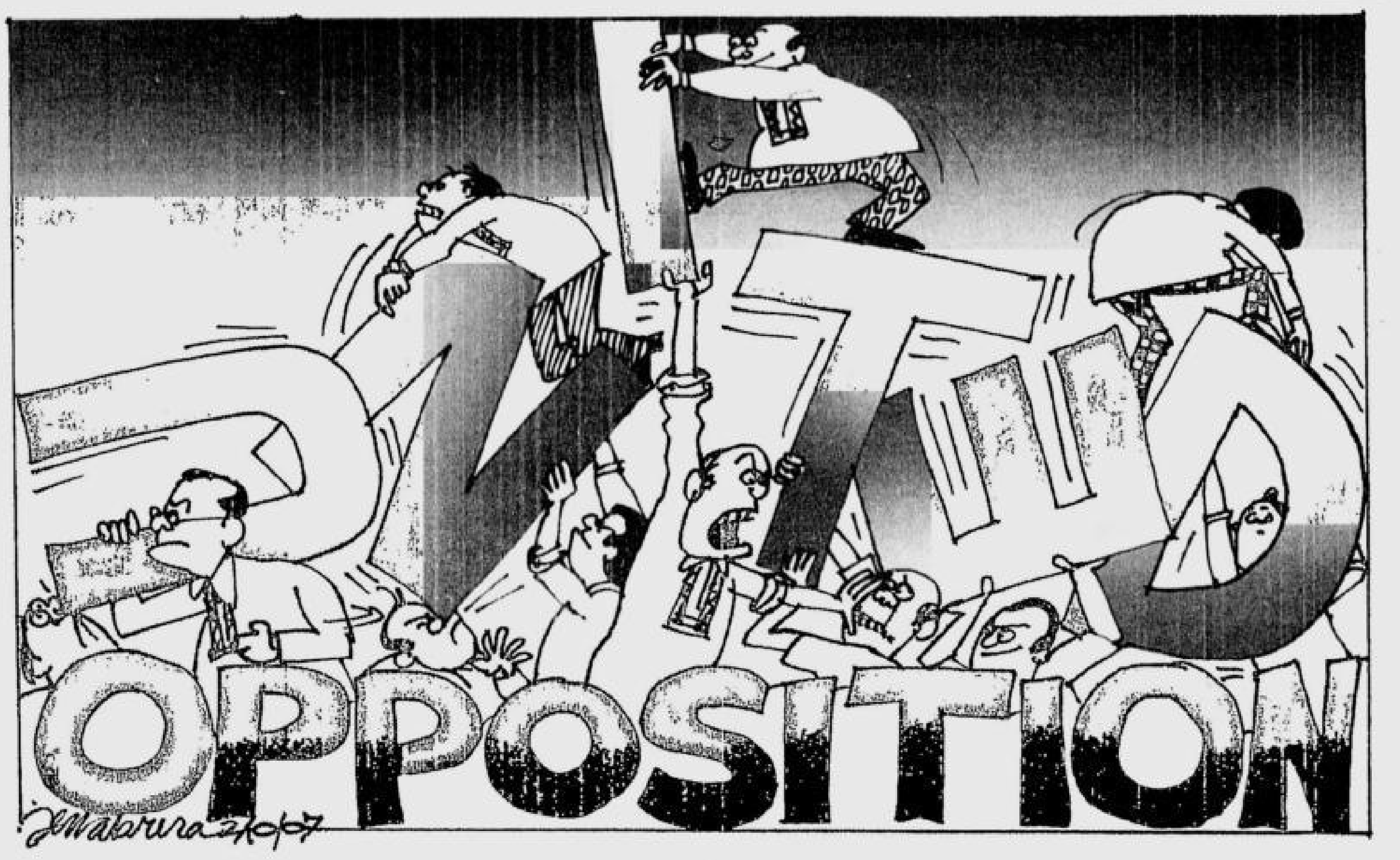

Voting in the Senate

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

FOR WHATEVER IT MAY BE WORTH TO CONscientious Filipinos who will be exercising their suffrage this coming May, I am offering the following information (and comments) on how the members of the Senate voted on various important issues affecting the high interests of the nation.

In 1991, the senators debated on the proposed extension of the RP-US Bases Treaty, which had been so abused in favor of American servicemen who had violated our laws in our own territory and left the country unpunished.

Those who were for their required concurrence to its ratification were Heherson Alvarez, Edgardo Angara, Neptali Gonzales, Ernesto Herrera, Jose Lina Jr., John Osmeña, Vicente Paterno, Alberto Romulo, Santanina Rasul, Leticia Ramos Shahani and Mamintal Tamano.

As they were less than the needed 2/3 of the Senate for such approval under Art. VII, Sec. 21 of the Constitution, they were defeated by the "Magnificent Twelve," as they were called by the appreciative public.

The applauded objectors were Jovito Salonga, the Senate president at the time who led the fight against the treaty, with Agapito Aquino, Juan Ponce Enrile, Joseph Estrada, Teofisto Guingona, Sotero Laurel, Ernesto Maceda, Orlando Mercado, Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Rene Saguisag, Wigberto Tañada and Victor Ziga.

In 2001, the prosecutors during the impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada moved to open the sealed envelope supposed to contain crucial evidence against the embattled accused. They were blocked by 11 diehard defenders of Erap, who earned much popular disdain, especially for one of them who danced a jig over their numerical victory.

The "Craven Eleven," as they were called by the indignant public, were Nikki Coseteng, Juan Ponce Enrile, Gregorio Honasan, Robert Jaworski, Blas Ople, Tessie Oreta, John Osmeña, Ramon Revilla, Miriam Defensor Santiago, Vicente Sotto III and Francisco Tatad.

Ten senators angrily protested the suppression of the truth by mere superiority of numbers. Their dramatic walk-out abruptly aborted the impeachment trial, ignited Edsa II, forced Erap to move out of Malacañang, and installed in his place Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who later swore she would not run for President in 2004 but did.

The heroes of that historic episode were Rodolfo Biazon, Renato Cayetano, Franklin Drilon, Juan Flavier, Teofisto Guingona, Loren Legarda, Sergio Osmeña III, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Raul Roco.

Last year, the Smith rape trial focused public attention on the Visiting Forces Agreement and its correct interpretation. The records show that it was ratified by President Estrada in 1999 with the concurrence of 2/3 of the Senate led by its president then, Marcelo Fernan.

He was joined by Robert Barbers, Rodolfo Biazon, Renato Cayetano, Nikki Coseteng, Franklin Drilon, Juan Ponce Enrile, Juan Flavier, Gregorio Honasan, Robert Jaworski, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Blas Ople, Tessie Oreta, John Osmeña, Ramon Revilla, Miriam Defensor Santiago, Vicente Sotto III and Francisco Tatad

The "Magnificent Five" who opposed the treaty were Teofisto Guingona, Loren Legarda, Sergio Osmeña III, Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Raul Roco.

The rest of those senators listed above have died or retired while a few are hoping to make a generally hopeless comeback. Others have returned to business like Paterno, education like Laurel, civic matters like Salonga, law practice like Saguisag, or to a restful or regretful obscurity.

And while we're listing the admirable and censurable members of the Senate on the basis of their voting records, let us add the following past and present members of the entertainment business who have enriched or cheapened the Senate, depending on your point of view.

They are Rogelio de la Rosa, Joseph Estrada, Eddie Ilarde, Robert Jaworski, Freddie Webb, Tito Sotto, Orlando Mercado, Noli de Castro, Loren Legarda, Ramon Revilla, Jinggoy Estrada, Bong Revilla, Lito Lapid, and probably but hopefully not, Richard Gomez, Eduardo Manzano and Cesar Montano.

Rogelio de la Rosa ran for president and later withdrew as a candidate in 1961, was later appointed to the foreign service with the rank of ambassador and eventually became the doyen du corps in Cambodia. Joseph Estrada started as a municipal mayor, became a senator, then Vice President of the Philippines and later the only President forced out of office after his impeachment for plunder and other related offenses. Legarda and De Castro ran for the vice-presidency in 2004.

The other above-named actor-senators served undistinguished terms and some were even re-elected for doing nothing; others were defeated in the 2001 elections. A few brassy ones are hoping to return to their cushy jobs with the help of their adoring fans, and two of them shifted to the opposite party after their original party junked them. A few capped their useless public service by wisely returning, or were deported back, to private life.

This little reminder may be a useful guide for voters who will decide the changed composition of the Senate next May. Or it may just be ignored with the distraction of the seductive clink of coins from the usual suspects.

The good and the bad

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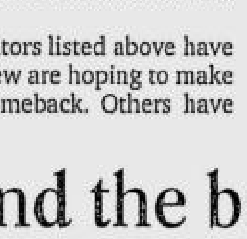


Solita Collas-Monsod

TO THE BEST OF MY RECOLLECTION, TWO years ago President Macapagal-Arroyo, in her State of the Nation Address, alluded to the marked contrast between the country's economic situation (good) and political conditions (terrible). She was right, and the contrast is even more marked now, as far as yours truly is concerned, as the economy continues to improve, while the polity continues to deteriorate. Let's look at both:

The current economic situation can be (with a little poetic license) likened to a silver cloud because of all the good news we hear: a real growth rate for 2006 that, at 5.4 percent, was at least equal to the average growth rate of economies in Emerging Asia (without China and India); the economy showing sustained growth over a longer period than any other in the past 20 years; an inflation rate last month that, at 3.9 percent, was the lowest since October 2003; an unemployment rate, which had shown a year-on-year increase in July 2006, holding steady in October, with the underemployment rate down. More good news: a decrease in the budget deficit to 1 percent of GDP, which was below all expectations (I think the target was 2.1 percent), earning kudos from international credit rating agencies, and reductions in the interest rates that the country has to pay on its borrowings; the related decrease in our debt-to-GDP ratios to more comfortable levels, which in turn contributed to the decrease in the deficit; the hefty increase in foreign direct investments as well as an increase in the country's primary surplus (back to 1997, pre-Asian-crisis levels).

Let us not, however, get carried away. There are dark linings to this silver cloud. The "strong" peso may be weakening our economy, as it reduces the competitiveness of our export products, and increases the attractiveness of imports. Then, there is uncertainty as to whether the growth has reduced poverty incidence (it increased during the Estrada administration), since official poverty estimates are not yet available (the surveys are triennial, and the latest are for 2003). But the extent of poverty reduction will depend on what happened to income inequality (both data not yet available). The latest Social Weather Stations surveys show a decline in (self-rated) poverty incidence, but also show an increase in hunger. (While that seeming inconsistency may raise eyebrows, not to worry. It turns out that the measured changes in poverty and hunger are not statistically significant, i.e., the differences in the figures are not significantly different from zero, so we are not even sure if poverty increased or decreased.)

Not only that, we still have a very large pool of unemployed (3.7 million or 2.6 million, depending on the definition); there has been no increase in the quality of employment; the budget deficit decrease was achieved not just by an increase in revenues, but expenditure constraints, thanks to a lazy (and irresponsible) Congress' penchant for re-enacted budgets; and what is more, there has been a steady contraction in investments (FDI is only a small portion of the country's total investments, which means that domestic investors are gun-shy). All of these do not augur well for the future.

Let us turn to the polity. Using the same analogy, the clouds are not silver at all, but are very dark indeed. It has occurred to me that where attempts at usurping power came previously only from military elements, they have lately come from other sectors as well. At the height of the demands for the President's resignation, many groups did not want constitutional succession to take place. Instead, they wanted a "revolutionary government," with leaders either named or unnamed, depending on the group. This from civil society.

Not to be outdone on the power-grabbing front, some members of our legislature tried their hand as well, hiding first behind a "people's initiative," to arrogate executive power unto themselves, and when that failed, making in a last desperate attempt to push for a constituent assembly without the Senate. The hunger for power, at any cost and by any means, is a blight on our polity.

Equally disgusting is the increasing arrogance of the powerful—bending or breaking rules, behaving as if they were above the law (like landlords who obstruct agrarian reform and get away with it), applying the law selectively, turning institutions on their heads or treating them as private fiefdoms. There is the "Tatad Phenomenon" named after the person who first described a virulent strain in political dynasties: members of the same family attempting to hold different political offices, but the same political office simultaneously. And finally, there is the crisscrossing spectacle, giving the saying "Politics makes strange bedfellows" new depths (pun intended) of meaning.

All these are occurring even as corruption in the country has worsened, at least relative to other countries: the Philippines ranks 121st among 163 countries in the Corruption Perception Index. And even as about a quarter of Filipino families (as of 2003) continue to be mired in poverty.

But there are other silver linings. For one thing, the Supreme Court has come to the rescue of the people time and time again, stopping our so-called "servants" from riding roughshod over us. And for another, there are the coming elections, where we will have a golden (silver?) opportunity to repudiate aspiring bums or throw out those already in power.

Vox populi.

Connie Dy's one good story

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN OUR CREATIVE WRITING CLASSES AT THE University of the Philippines decades ago, eminent professors such as NVM Gonzalez and Francisco Arcellana would tell us that there's at least one good story in every person. I was reminded of that when Cecile Alvarez and I went "local" in our dzRH program last Sunday, following yet another adage attributed, if I'm not mistaken, to former US Speaker Newt Gingrich: "All politics is local." Since the elections are upon us, we decided to invite Pasay City Rep. Connie Dy as guest, taping an hour before the melee, involving suspended Mayor Peewee Trinidad, broke out last week. Dy, who revealed during the show that she'll be running against Trinidad for mayor, cited the Office of the Ombudsman's issue against him: over-priced garbage collection contracts and violations of RA 9184, the Procurement Law. She said that while Trinidad had earmarked for garbage collection in 2004 and 2005 a whopping P464.6 million, the acting mayor, Allan Panaligan (who'll run in Dy's place in Pasay's lone district come May), was able to obtain a contract worth a total of P177 million with three winning bidders to cover 201 barangays for the entire year.

* * *

In the course of our interview, we realized that the garbage issue was nothing compared to the incredible and inspiring success story of the Kampi congresswoman. Here was that one good story Franz and NVM spoke about. My readers are familiar with other success stories featured here about House members, such as Baguio's Maurice Domogan, who overcame enormous hardships to become one of the House's legal luminaries, and Basilan's Gerry Salappudin, a farmer's son who never heard of school until he was grown-up.

Dy's father, Roberto Azarcon, was a security guard in a Surigao paper company who moved his family to Pasay when the children were very young to seek a better future. He became a bouncer for D'Wave, the leading nightclub then, owned by Esting Pagaspas and famous for its beautiful hostesses. When the hostesses needed a ride, he'd drive for them. Connie's Caviteña mother, Lourdes, would deliver blue-seal cigarettes obtained from "smuggling king" Lino Bocalan to rich clients in Manila. Connie, barely a toddler then, would park herself at the door of D'Wave, selling cigarettes consigned to her mom. On weekends, she sold *tocino* and *chorizo* to the hostesses.

When she was about 10, her father was stricken with high blood pressure. Since they couldn't afford to have him treated at the Manila Sanitarium, she and her mother rushed him to Philippine General Hospital. But the traffic was terrible and he died before reaching the PGH.

That experience seared the girl. (Decades later, as a politician, she displayed keen sensitivity to the medical needs of poorer constituents and organized medical missions.) It strengthened her resolve to get an education when she noted that her father couldn't reply to his English-speaking taxi customers. Times got harder for the orphaned family. She recalled that her mom was being harassed by the Metrocom and that they often went hungry.

* * *

When she enrolled at the Philippine Women's University, Connie sold sandwiches to classmates to earn some money for her daily expenses. One day she met a guy named Joey Dy at the bowling alley and liked him. They got married and produced five children. Connie later studied at the Philippine School of Interior Design and put up her own design firm, recruiting young graduates to give them a break.

At some point, politicians tried enticing her husband, who's in specialized construction, to enter politics, but he wasn't interested. Why not me? Connie thought. She then ran for councilor as an independent, and landed next to the top. After one term, she ran for Congress and won two terms. The hardships she went through helped her acquire that "*masa* touch" that has been her most valuable asset in politics.

* * *

Since I wrote about the refusal of Mercury Drug to allow senior citizens to purchase medicines with their credit cards, I have gotten a lot of response from seniors who were pleased that their problems are being tackled. The chain's policy is tough for seniors inasmuch as they usually buy in bulk with the prescription they obtain (a prescription is needed in order to avail of the 20-percent discount). Often, because of the big amount involved, seniors prefer to do their buying with a credit card.

Vice President Noli de Castro reacted to the seniors' complaints by writing Vivian Q. Ascona, Mercury Drug president, last Feb. 2. He reminded Ascona that the policy of not allowing senior citizens to use credit cards violates RA No. 9257, the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003, which he authored, as well as its implementing rules and regulations and the directive of the Department of Trade on this issue. Wrote De Castro: "Upon presentation of the Senior Citizen's identification, there is no other condition imposed for the grant of the 20-percent discount except that the purchase of medicines must be for the exclusive use or enjoyment of the senior citizen. The law does not distinguish whether or not the purchase is on cash basis or through credit card." He asked the company to "fully comply with the law and discontinue the said policy and practice." He also asked Ascona to take steps "to ensure that your drug retail outlets allow the full enjoyment of the 20-percent discount afforded to our senior citizens by law."

De Castro's chief of staff, lawyer Jesse H. T. Andres, also wrote this columnist to inform readers that the Vice President has asked the health and trade departments "to monitor and enforce compliance with the law and related regulations." Let's hope all drugstores will cooperate speedily.

'GE rice' for sale in supermarkets

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

RICE IS A POLITICAL COMMODITY, CARMEN Guerrero Nakpil once wrote (in fact, she wrote an entire novel on this premise), especially so in Asia, where it is the "staple" food.

Anyone who doubts this need only look back to the situation in the Philippines in the late 1980s when there was a shortage of rice and the government, to prevent panic, resorted to selling rice out of trucks, with long lines of consumers, most of them housewives, spending much of their days queuing for their family's supply.

The snaking lines of mostly poor folk clutching *bayongs* or plastic bags in hopes of buying enough rice to see them through the day became quite a dramatic statement on the state not just of rice distribution, rice importation or even of the economy. It became a symbol of the state of governance, with the depletion of the country's rice stock emblematic of how government was failing in its job to deliver services to the people.

Oil price increases excite mainly vehicle owners and public utility owners who balk at having to jack up fares and thus alienate the riding public. Peso-dollar exchange rates may be touted by government functionaries eager to show that things are rosy on the economic front. But it makes only importers happy, and alarms both exporters and families of OFWs who see the remittances of their loved ones abroad dwindle in peso value.

But rice prices—and rice supply—affect everyone here, rich or poor, *burgis or jologs*, Kapamilya or Kapuso. This is why administrations know better than to tamper with rice supply and demand, making sure, through the National Food Authority, that there is enough supply for everyone and keeping a "buffer stock" handy in case demand shoots up. Rice prices are also held in check, even if it means colluding with rice traders and alienating rice farmers.

* * *

THIS is why Von Hernandez, Southeast Asian campaigner for Greenpeace, wonders why the issue of GMO rice being sold in local supermarkets has not hogged the headlines or gotten the publicity it deserves. "We've held two press conferences on the issue here and still it remains largely ignored," he says.

The issue, which has blown up into a "massive scandal" elsewhere in Asia and Europe, was sparked in the Philippines by the discovery last November of GE (genetically engineered) contaminated rice being sold in the bigger supermarkets in Metro Manila. Greenpeace says the rice, being marketed as "Uncle Sam Texas Long Grain Rice," was sent to Japan for testing and the results show that "it has the same strain as 'Liberty rice,'" the brand name used by Bayer for its rice that was genetically altered to survive the powerful herbicide glufosinate. Field-tested from 1998 to 2001, development of "Liberty rice," or Bayer LL601, was halted in 2001 for unclear reasons, but later, Bayer itself informed the US Department of Agriculture of "LL601 contamination in the food chain." Today, says Greenpeace, LL601 rice is illegal (not approved for commercial distribution or human consumption) in any place in the world except in the US." Rice markets throughout Europe and in countries like Japan, Vietnam and Thailand have soundly rejected GE rice, and all rice from the US, for that matter.

So how and why was contaminated rice from the US able to enter the country and be sold openly in large supermarkets?

* * *

THAT'S what Greenpeace wants to know. This week, the group slapped the NFA with a "Notice of Violation" for allowing the importation and continued sale of genetically-modified rice. Greenpeace says that by law, such a commodity "cannot be legally distributed and marketed for human consumption in the country."

"Uncle Sam Texas Long Grain," distributed locally by Purefeeds Corp. of Sta. Ana, Manila, continues to be sold in supermarkets. The NFA, aside from being the country's leading rice importer, also oversees and regulates rice imports of farmers' groups and traders. "At the height of the worldwide Bayer LL601 scandal last year, the NFA issued a statement that they will monitor rice imports from the US and prevent GMO-tainted varieties from entering the country," Greenpeace points out. "However, the agency ignored the need to monitor GMO tainted rice already in Philippine shores. Up until now, the NFA refrains from commenting and acting on 'Uncle Sam Texas Long Grain.' Greenpeace is demanding that the NFA recall the GMO rice from the market and prevent further GMO contamination of the country's staple food."

* * *

WHY is Greenpeace so hot under the collar about GE foods?

Greenpeace briefing materials state that "genetic engineering takes place when genes from plants, animals or bacteria are inserted into plants or animals in a laboratory to create new organisms that would not occur naturally." Note that what are created are not just cross-bred or cross-pollinated organisms, but new organisms entirely, with all-new DNA codes. "The problem is that inserting genes can make strange things happen as they can interfere with the plants' or animals' own genes and might make the food toxic and bad to eat," says Greenpeace. Moreover, GE organisms can spread, reproduce and alter the environment. In Europe, farmers complained loudly after they found that their crops, grown organically or conventionally, had been contaminated with GE organisms from GE experimental plots nearby. "The release of GE organisms to the environment is irreversible," states Greenpeace.

By turning a blind eye to the presence of GE rice in local supermarkets (where they can still contaminate rice sharing the same shelf space), the government through the NFA and the DA, is placing not just our rice stocks in jeopardy. Our health and survival are also at stake.

Climate hysteria

WORLD VIEW

By Bjorn Lomborg

YOU WOULD HAVE HAD TO BE STUCK IN DEEPest Mongolia to avoid hearing that the United Nations' climate panel, the IPCC, issued a new report last week. Perhaps even in the depths of Mongolia, you would have heard the dire warnings emitted by journalists. You would have distilled from these agonized noises that the report concluded that global warming is worse than we had imagined, and that we need to take swift and strong action right now. You would have been misinformed.

The IPCC has produced a good report, an attempt to summarize what the world's scientists know about global warming. Unlike the Bush administration, which has been caught downplaying the science, the IPCC squarely tells us that mankind is largely responsible for the planet's recent warming. And, unlike Al Gore, who has traveled the world warning that our cities might soon be under the oceans, it refrains from scaremongering.

But lost among the hype is the unexciting fact that this report is actually no more dire than the IPCC's last report, issued in 2001. In two important ways, this year's effort was actually less dire.

The report reflected the fact that since 2001, scientists have become more certain that humans are responsible for a large part of global warming. Otherwise, though, this report had a definite sense of déjà vu. Estimates of temperature increases, heat waves and cold waves are all nearly identical to those produced six years ago.

The report did, however, contain two surprising facts. Both went unmentioned in most reports. First, the world's scientists have re-jigged their estimates about how much sea levels will rise. In the 1980s, America's Environmental Protection Agency expected oceans to rise by several meters by 2100. By the 1990s, the IPCC was expecting a 67-centimeter rise. Six years ago, it anticipated ocean levels would be 48.5 centimeters higher than they are currently. In this year's report, the estimated rise is 38.5 centimeters on average.

This is especially interesting since it fundamentally rejects one of the most harrowing scenes from Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth." In graphic detail, Gore demonstrated how a 20-foot rise in the sea level would inundate much of Florida, Shanghai and Holland. The IPCC report makes it clear that exaggerations of this magnitude have no basis in science, though clearly they frightened people and perhaps will win Gore an Academy Award.

The report also revealed the improbability of another Gore scenario: that global warming could make the Gulf Stream shut down, turning Europe into a new Siberia. The IPCC simply and tersely tells us that this scenario (also vividly depicted in the Hollywood movie "The Day After Tomorrow") is considered "very unlikely." Moreover, even if the Gulf Stream were to weaken over the century, this would be good, as there would be less net warming over land areas.

So why have we been left with a very different impression of the climate panel's report? The IPCC is by statute "politically neutral"; it is supposed to tell us just the facts and leave the rest to politicians and the people who elect them. This is why the report is a careful and sensible document.

But scientists and journalists, acting as intermediaries between the report and the public, have engaged in greenhouse activism. Elsewhere calling for immediate and substantial cuts in carbon emissions, the IPCC director even declared that he hoped the IPCC report would "shock people, governments into taking more serious action."

It is inappropriate for somebody in such an important and apolitical role to engage in blatant activism. Imagine if the director of the US Central Intelligence Agency published a new assessment of Iran, saying, "I hope this report will shock people, governments into taking more serious action."

Climate change is a real and serious problem. But the problem with the recent media frenzy is that some seem to believe no new report or development is enough if it doesn't reveal more serious consequences and more terrifying calamities than humanity has ever considered before.

Indeed, this media frenzy has little or no scientific backing. One of England's foremost climatologists, Mike Hulme, director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, points out that green militancy and megaphone journalism use "catastrophe and chaos as unguided weapons with which forlornly to threaten society into behavioral change." In his words, "We need to take a deep breath and pause."

A 38.5-centimeter rise in the ocean's levels is a problem, but by no means will it bring down civilization. Last century, sea levels rose by half that amount without most of us even noticing.

The UN tells us that there is virtually nothing we can do that would affect climate change before 2030. So we have to ask the hard question of whether we could do better by focusing on other issues first: helping real people improve their lives and resilience so they can better deal with the world's challenges.

When Nobel Laureate economists weighed up how to achieve the most good for the world in a recent project called the Copenhagen Consensus, they found that HIV/AIDS, malaria, malnutrition and trade barriers should all be tackled long before we commit to any dramatic action on climate change.

With the world in a fury about cutting greenhouse gasses, it is easy to forget that there are other and better ways to do some good for the planet. Good decisions come from careful consideration. The IPCC report provides that. But the cacophony of screaming that has accompanied it does not help.

—Project Syndicate

Bjørn Lomborg is the organizer of Copenhagen Consensus, adjunct professor at Copenhagen Busin School, and editor of "How to Spend $50 [illegible] Make the World a Better Place."

Tolerance

YOUNG BLOOD

Vida Soraya Verzosa

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

"KHADAFFY JANJALANI IS HOT!"

That was what a former classmate said after seeing his photograph in the INQUIRER, back when we were 18 years old. Later, she joined the New People's Army and disappeared in one of the provinces near the University of the Philippines Los Baños.

With news reports confirming Janjalani's death after DNA testing, I wonder how that old classmate of mine reacted when she learned that he had taken a bullet in his neck during his *Fajr* (Dawn Prayer). Several times in the past, we would closely scrutinize the ubiquitous poster of Most Wanted Terrorists at the MRT station and she would sigh that so much violence in this world resulted from lack of religious tolerance and respect for cultural differences. But for hose who ended up on the "wrong" end of the religio-political spectrum as defined by the al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah, or the Abu Sayyaf Group, I doubt if tolerance and respect would help ease the pain of being kidnapped and held for ransom.

I grew up in a family that is half-Muslim and half-Catholic. My mother is the granddaughter of an imam, while my father is a former Jesuit ex-seminarian who converted to Islam so he could marry her. And in our home, tolerance is scrupulously observed. We are used to seeing the Koran and the Bible placed side by side. We make sure that our meat is *halal* for my maternal grandfather, yet we followed traditional customs in the all-girl Catholic schools where we went for grade school. My mother initiates development projects for disadvantaged women in Mindanao, while my father is active in the Bible Study Fellowship. My siblings and I were baptized in Muslim and Christian rites and we have both Muslim and Christian names. We were made to understand that we could choose our spiritual path when we reached the age of majority.

When we were younger, my grandfather, the first Muslim ship captain of his generation and a star athlete in Zamboanga, would take us to the Eid'l Fitr celebrations after Ramadan. After that, he would delight us with stories about our Tausug and Samal-Bangingi family history. One of his oft-repeated tales was about how his grandmother, a Dutch missionary in Borneo, was abducted by his grandfather, a pirate.

At that time, not having read the Revised Penal Code yet, being a pirate seemed to me like an exciting occupation that involved traversing the high seas, visiting exotic islands and bringing the loot home. Of course, in grade school, I didn't know that piracy also includes a host of other felonies now associated with terrorism. Before 9/11, the only conflict we read about in the newspapers concerned Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's tantrums and the Gulf War. Terrorism only became real and apparent to us when tragic events abroad triggered a global paranoia. Locally, terrorism and Islam were still mutually exclusive.

Among the educated, well-traveled Muslims I've met outside of my family, no one can even remotely be associated with terrorism. They always emphasize that peace is something they constantly aspire for, despite being stereotyped as either hawkers in shopping centers or people who are prone to running amok.

When my grandfather was still courting my grandmother, he had to endure discrimination and the malicious talk of their neighbors in their small town. Whenever our Theology teacher talked about the conflict between Catholics and Muslims, the rest of the class would steal glances at our lone Muslim classmate to see how he would react.

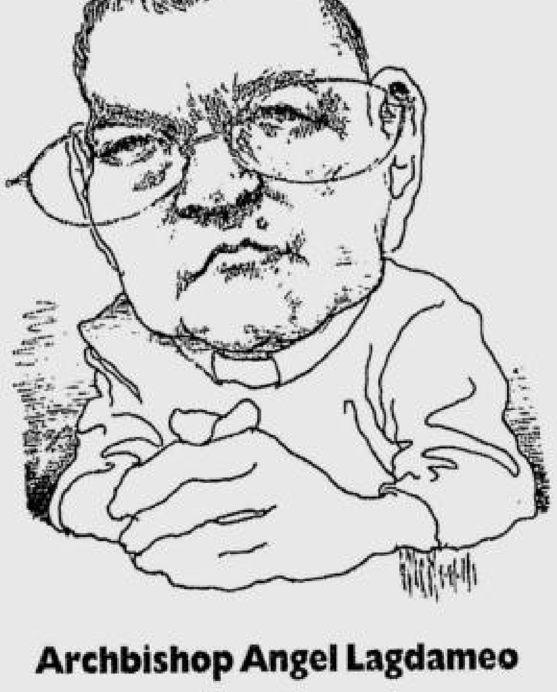
My grandma eloped with her Moro suitor. Now she never tires of telling visitors that she was lucky to have married him. "*Pulido siya, hindi naman Abu Sayyaf,*" she would say, with a hearty chuckle that belies her resigned acceptance of the reality that as the first wife, she has to put up with a second and a third one, and so on.

Since we moved to Metro Manila, we knew very little about how the rest of the clan were doing in Mindanao. In hushed tones, my mother once related how a distant uncle joined a separatist group and was among those killed when government troops overrun Camp Abubakar. She said that this particular uncle was known to be quick tempered, so his death didn't come as a surprise to her.

To me what is surprising is that despite all the resources funneled to the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, an egalitarian, lasting peace remains elusive. In this regard, I must agree with my friend, the NPA amazon. No, I am not going to say that Janjalani was indeed an attractive man, but I happen to believe that whether we go to a mosque or a church to pray, peace will continue to elude us for as long as the sounds of gunfire drown out the voices calling for sincere inter-faith dialogue.

Vida Soraya Verzosa, 24, is a student at the Ateneo School of Law.

IN THE NEWS



Archbishop Angel Lagdameo

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Economic boom: another attempt to delude us

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

ON THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF EDSA II, President Macapagal-Arroyo stated in a televised forum at Malacañang that Filipinos are experiencing the benefits of an economic boom but they just don't know it yet. (INQUIRER, 1/21/07) It should have been music to the ears of millions of Filipinos, but how could it be? The SWS survey in November 2006 showed that 51 percent of Filipinos considered themselves poor and that almost 3 million Filipino households experienced hunger in the previous three months.

The unvarnished truth is that a big chunk of our population is wallowing in poverty while economic development cannot keep pace with the soaring birth rate. In short, a Malthusian nightmare is staring us in the face.

The economy is increasingly dependent on the remittances of overseas Filipino workers and foreign loans. Our young people cannot look ahead to a bright future because of the deteriorating quality of our education and the lack of job opportunities. Meanwhile, graft and corruption remains pervasive. We're losing our self-respect as a nation. And there is a lack of introspection among our people.

To be sure, nobody will ever believe Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's claim that she is "the instrument of their (the Filipinos) most ardent aspirations." Her six years in office have been far from inspiring. To GMA, good governance means keeping the country in a constant state of agitation for her political survival. Consider the following: EO 464 and the stifling of the congressional power of inquiry, calibrated preemptive response, Presidential Proclamation 1017, Hello Garci tapes, fertilizer scam, two impeachment rejections, people's initiative, Charter change, and other destabilizing initiatives and missteps.

GMA went on to claim that the Philippine economy grew 5 percent annually under her administration and that a sustainable growth rate of at least 7 percent for more than a couple of years more will make the country a First World economy. Just look at China and it becomes obvious that GMA's statement was another attempt to deceive and delude us.

Since Deng Xiao Ping liberalized China's economy in 1979, that country has been recording sustainable growth rate of between 8 and 12 percent annually. Yet, it has refrained from declaring itself a First World country. The reason is that, beyond the glitter and high-rise buildings in Shanghai, Beijing and Shenzen, China still has many pockets of poverty and its GDP per capita was only $1,700 as of 2005. Despite its growing economic clout in the world stage, China considers itself a developing country. Such modesty and honesty cannot be found in Malacañang.

—MARIA LUISA INSIONG,
12 President Ave., Parañaque City

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SMART

Pensioners feel forgotten by GSIS

BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF the GSIS e-Card, pensioners received their monthly pensions regularly and on time, either through mail, a bank or a satellite office. They didn't have to go through so much hustle.

Now, the old age and disabled pensioners go through so many difficulties in getting the e-Card, and then in withdrawing their pensions through the e-Card due to weakened senses and reflexes and poor mobility. Making matter worse, they have to contend with ATMs that frequently go "off-line."

Instead of providing the retirees with good service through the use of modern technology, the Government Service Insurance System is making it difficult for pensioners to get their pensions. The long lines of retirees at GSIS satellite and servicing offices are a proof of this.

Probably the people manning these offices are not giving GSIS' high officials the right feedback, which should include the pensioners' complaints on this matter.

No wonder there is a feeling among the affected pensioners that the GSIS and the present administration remain insensitive to their plight. And the pensioners who in the twilight years of their lives feel insignificant and forgotten.

—ERNESTO DE LUNA,
Daet, Camarines Norte

Pfizer's medicines can be sold cheaper

CARLOS SUPERDRUG FULLY SUPPORTS THE stand of Drugstores Association of the Philippines (DSAP) on Pfizer's Sulit Card discounting program.

Although we are among the few chain drugstores belatedly accredited as redemption centers of Pfizer's discount program, we remain united with and supportive of our colleagues in the drugstore industry in their clamor to be treated fairly.

We find the Sulit Card project unfair to the other drugstores because it is predatory in nature. Non-accredited drugstores are unable to compete squarely in terms of pricing; they are also severely affected because their goodwill is compromised. We are speaking from experience because we experienced the same when the Pfizer program was first launched two years ago. Not only did we discover that by encouraging our customers to enroll in the e-Card program, the Sulit Card in effect also encouraged them to buy from Mercury Drug stores. We ended up having three years worth of Norvasc products gathering dust in our warehouses.

Worse, because of the limited reach of the project which only involves redemption centers located only in highly urbanized areas, millions of Filipinos, mostly the poor people residing in the barrios and in far-flung municipalities, are being denied of affordable quality medicines.

Thus, we want to reiterate our reasonable demand for Pfizer to accredit all drugstores, especially DSAP members, to be Sulit Card redemption centers. Or to make matters simpler, we hope Pfizer will revisit the suggestion to lower the prices of the items covered by the Sulit Card program so they would be comparably as cheap as the Pfizer products found in India and other countries. This way, more Filipinos can afford to buy Pfizer-manufactured medicines.

—CELIA O. CARLOS and
BARNARD CARLOS BALQUIEDRA,
Carlos SuperDrug, 112 E. Garcia St.,
Cubao, Quezon City

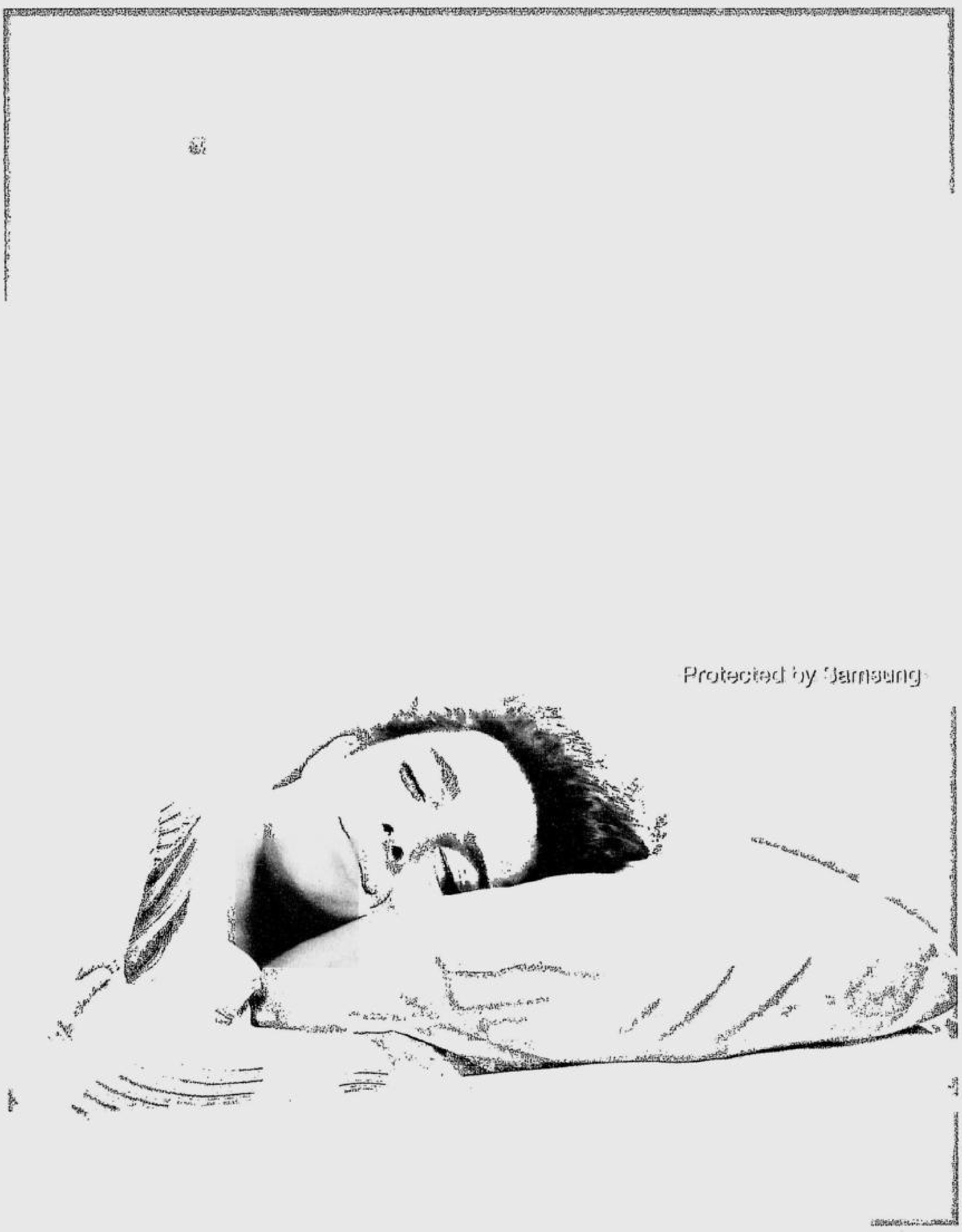
A public servant with a conscience

FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNDERSECRETARY Zosimo Paredes greatly impressed me with his decision to resign as executive director of the Presidential Commission on the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement, to express his disagreement with Malacañang over its disregard of a trial court order and the transfer of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith to the US Embassy.

I, too, am also against that move of Malacañang. First of all, it violated the principle of separation of powers. The three branches of government have their own distinct duties and responsibilities to perform. But in this case, the executive branch showed utter disrespect for the judicial branch.

Paredes is a rarity in the public service. I hope he will inspire our public officials and his fortitude as a man of conscience will be emulated by them.

—KARLA ELAINE KATIGBAK,
karla_elaine_katigbak@yahoo.com



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Tel. No. (074)443-9256
Fax No. (074)443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
2nd Floor, Los Baños Bldg.
Cor. Peñaranda and Aguinaldo Sts.
Legazpi City
Telefax No. (052) 480-4182
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/regions

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A MEMBER of the Moro National Liberation Front Bangsamoro Armed Forces Jabal Uhud Task Force stands guard inside MNLF Commander Ustadz Habier Malik's residence in Barangay Bitan-ag, Panamao, Sulu. Bitan-ag is a stronghold of the MNLF. The MNLF recently held captive government and Army officials, who were released after almost three days. REM ZAMORA

CHR says gov't troops to blame for Sulu clash

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (CHR) in Western Mindanao has faulted Marine soldiers for the Jan. 18 bloodshed in Patikul, Sulu, which created tension between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Jose Manuel Mamauag, CHR Western Mindanao director, said what happened in Barangay Timpook during that day was an "utter disregard of human rights that resulted in the senseless killing."

Mamauag said based on the CHR investigation, the clash was the offshoot of an "unprovoked attack perpetrated by personnel of the Philippine Marines in Sitio Tandu Batoh, Barangay Timpook."

The military has reported that what occurred was an encounter between members of the Philippine Marines and Abu Sayyaf bandits. At least 10 bandits and three soldiers were killed during the clash, according to the Western Mindanao Command.

The CHR said based on its investigation, only eight people from the village, one of them a 14-year-old boy, was killed.

Quoting witnesses, Mamauag said the encounter started when Marines suddenly fired at the victims.

Siliya Usman, a witness, said the soldiers knew they were MNLF members.

"We were waving our MNLF flag when soldiers attacked our place, but they ignored the MNLF flag, they kept on firing," she told CHR investigators.

Some armed villagers returned fire during the commotion and hit some soldiers.

Parayda Abdua, who is six months pregnant, corroborated Usman's statement.

But Lt. Col. Rudy de Bellen, operations officer of the Marine Forces Southern Command, said what occurred was an encounter that was not initiated by the Marines.

He said troops from the Marine Battalion Landing Team 9 went to Barangay Timpook after receiving "confirmed reports about armed men believed to be members of the Abu Sayyaf Group."

"When they reached the area around 12 noon, an exchange of fire occurred, killing three Marine soldiers identified as Staff Sgt. Jose Patricio and Corporals Enrico de la Cruz and Richard Celestino. The Marines also lost four M16 rifles," he said.

De Bellen said Timpook was not an identified MNLF territory because Ustadz Habier Malik, the group's spiritual adviser, only mentioned Bitan-ag, in Panamao, as a MNLF territory.

Patikul Mayor Esmond Suhuri has sided with De Bellen, saying what took place was an encounter that required Marine response. *Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

FARMERS hold a lie-in protest at the Department of Agriculture office in Quezon City. The DA is encouraging them to become competitive to avoid price manipulation by middlemen and traders. RAFFY LERMA

DA chief tags middlemen, traders price manipulators

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—AGRICULTURE Secretary Arthur Yap took a swipe at traders and middlemen who used the news on frost damage in the province to justify an increase in vegetable prices.

"The frost damage should not be used as a reason to say that there has been a substantial damage to warrant an increase in prices," Yap told reporters at the Department of Agriculture office in Quezon City on Wednesday.

But Yap said farmers are also to be blamed when middlemen dictate vegetable prices because they refuse to compete and avail themselves of the direct access markets the government opened for them.

Frost swamped some vegetable farms in Atok, Kibungan, Mankayan and Buguias towns on Jan. 31 when the temperature dropped to 9 degrees Celsius.

The provincial agriculture office, however, reported that the damage was minimal as most of the farms hit by frost were in the land preparation stage.

But Yap, who visited some of Metro Manila's public markets on Wednesday, found that vegetables sold at P6 a kilogram at the trading post here were sold from P20 to P25 per kg at the metropolitan area.

Yap said a reason is that traders could have encouraged talks that the frost damaged many vegetable farms and supply was affected.

He said the only way for farmers to cut the chain of middlemen is to compete within the system.

Yap said the government would provide more direct markets to the farmers since "the President wanted vegetable farmers all over the country to become profitable vegetable growers."

He said the DA has already opened 13 markets for Benguet vegetables in Metro Manila. Another 30 markets will open by March.

The DA has also launched the Barangay Food Terminal program where the farmers could retail their crops, he said.

"The farmers can now bring their produce and sell their vegetables directly in these markets and avoid layers of middlemen," he said.

Unfortunately, Yap said, farmers have not fully taken advantage of these markets by still preferring to sell their harvests to traders.

"It appears that the farmers are more comfortable dealing with traders even if the traders were buying their crops at very low prices in the last 20 to 30 years," he said.

Farmers must not complain when traders dictate the prices or manipulate the prices when there is an opportunity, like the news on frost damage, he said.

"The total frost damage is nothing compared to the two to three million tons of vegetables traded in Benguet every day," he said.

The DA could not also order the arrest of the middlemen because they are legitimate businessmen, Yap said. *Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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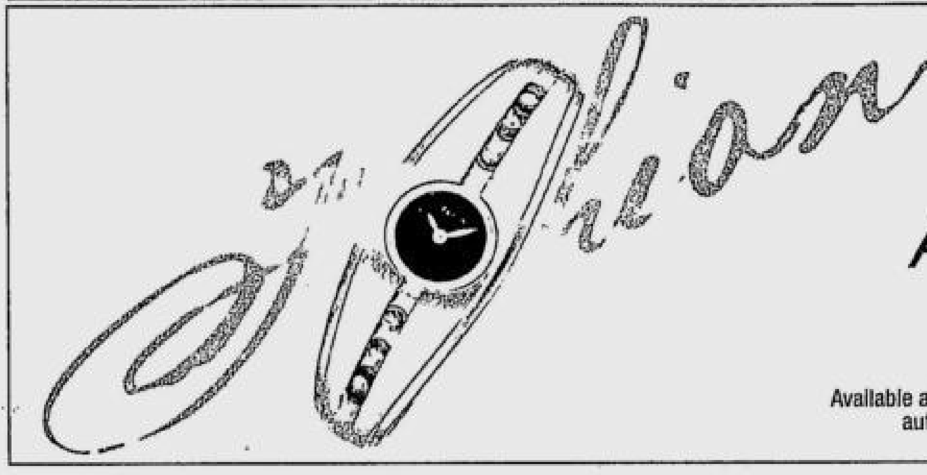

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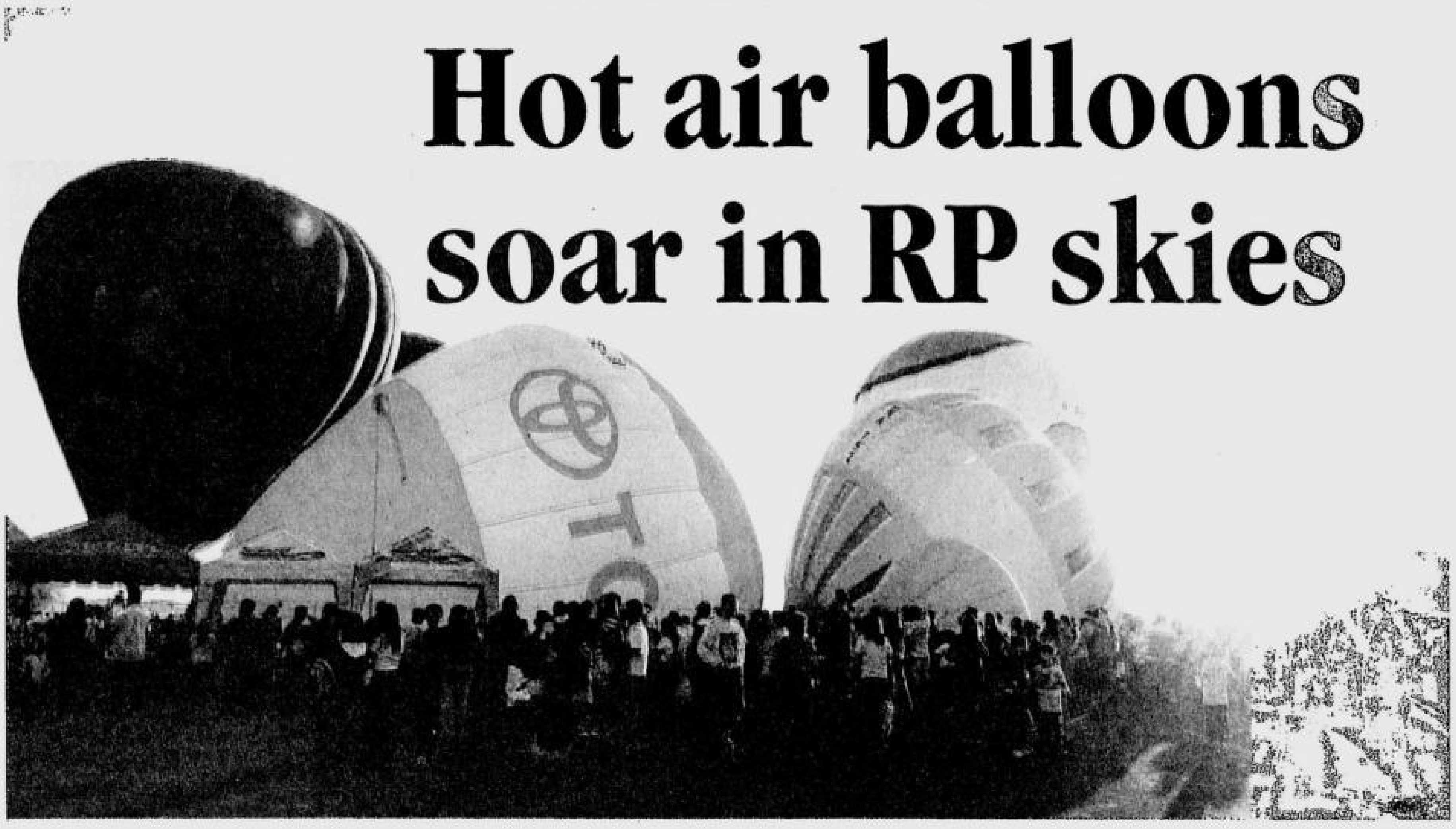
Hot air balloons soar in RP skies



HOT AIR balloons take off from Clark Field in Angeles City. More than 20 balloons from all over the world are taking part in the four-day Philippine International Hot Air Balloon Festival. Organizers had planned the event to cheer up residents of Central Luzon following the destruction wrought by Mt. Pinatubo. Today, the festival is hoped to continue cheering up people following a series of natural disasters that brought suffering to millions. TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—TWENTY-three hot air balloons gently soared to the clear skies here on Thursday, opening Southeast Asia's only sports aviation festival meant this time to lift the spirits of Filipinos swamped last year by a series of natural disasters.

Promoting Philippine tourism further, international balloonists, including Germany's Wolf Kadach, will make a fly-in to Boracay Island in Aklan on Monday.

"In the midst of all our country's problems, this is our contribution," the 11th Philippine International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta organizing committee, led by events director Capt. Joy Roa, said at the start of the four-day festival.

"We also get a thrill out of making the country folk's ordinary day extraordinary. We sincerely hope to see more smiles and more helping hands to keep this going in the years ahead," the committee added in a statement.

It did stir smiles in 5-year-old Frankie Diaz.

"I like all the balloons," the girl said as the Festo blimp, the last of the 23 giant profane-filled balloons, took to the skies from the Air Force City here.

Seeing families come in droves as early as 5:30 a.m., stall holder Pam Reyes said: "People in Clark and Pampanga are lucky to have this event because it is a whole lot of fun. I feel that this shows to the world how festive and hospitable we Filipinos are."

Popular

The popularity of the event has spread, drawing veteran hot air balloon pilots like Renate and Alfred Mathes of Germany, Adrian Held of Switzerland and Chris and Sue Davies of the United Kingdom.

The event has never tired Bruno Palosfalvi of Hungary from joining since its initial staging. Brita Berguist of Sweden is the only woman balloonist among the participants. The American couple Don and Debbie Conner always flew as a pair in 23 countries.

Filipinos Den Roa and Joel Guilas, both of Air Ads, are representing the Philippines. Roa's balloon carries the country's colors.

Because the fiesta is not only about balloons, but "everything that flies," there are aerobatic airplane performances by Meynard Halili, Bill Wright and Xavier Estabillo. There is also an airplane rally by 15 international pilots on board various aircraft like Pilatus PC12, TB20, Cessna,' TB2, HS-ATI, Piper Arrow, Piper Seneca, Piper Malibu and Jabiru J200.

Helicopters—Augusta-A109, Daupin, Robinson R44, Hughes 500C—are also going to grace Clark's skies. Levy Laus, Clark Development Corp. president and a regular contributor to the event, is flying in his Bell 206 helicopter.

The Angeles City Flying Club showcases its ultra light aircraft. The Glidersports Association of the Philippines, which lent civic services by taking aerial shots of disaster areas and illegal dumps, has joined the festival for paragliding and micro light flights. More sky diving groups from the Armed Forces of the Philippines are also joining the event.

Four Malaysians and Thais are joining for the first time, introducing motorized paragliding.

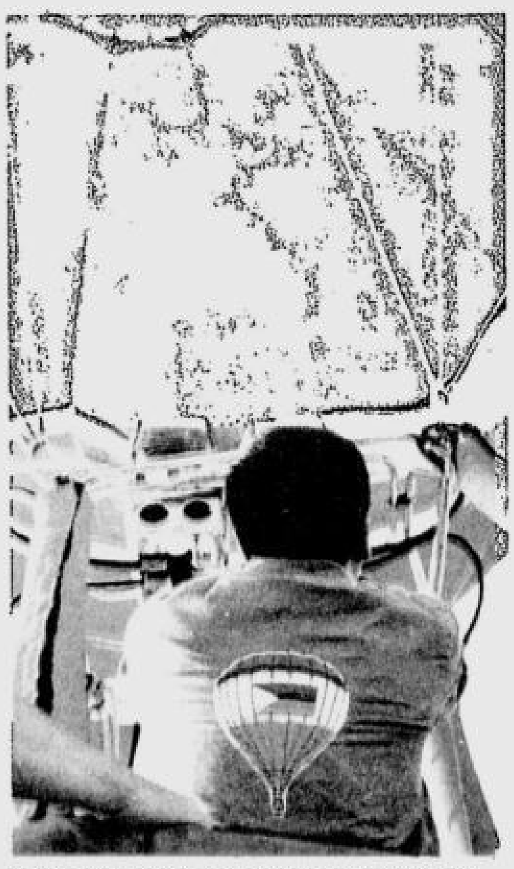
Kites

The only active kite team in the country—the Angeles City-based Kite Team Philippines—will have a choreographed kite flying exhibition as well as workshops for children. Also a must-see, organizers said, is the race and flying formations of radio-controlled aircraft.

The fiesta was started in 1994, together with the Department of Tourism, as a way to break the gloom from Mt. Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions.

It was inspired by a similar but larger event in Oskhosh, Wisconsin, according to Roa.

The Philippines' version drew 20,000 to 30,000 people yearly. It was once canceled in 1998 on the heels of the Asian financial crisis.



JOY ROA, of the UPS Balloon Philippines, prepares to take flight in the 11th Philippine International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta. AARON VICENCIO/CONTRIBUTOR

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Radio show has a new take on love songs

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

A RADIO PROGRAM HOSTED BY A PRIEST DEparts from being mushy and preachy by bringing a new take on popular love songs that somehow connect with the Gospel.

Crosstalk, a radio show aired Sundays from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. over Z100 FM, is becoming popular even if it is barely a year old. The proof is the brisk sales of its 40 episodes recorded on compact discs, with the special Christmas edition hitting 5,000 copies. Among the frequent buyers are professionals, who regard the CDs as their daily meditation guide, and overseas Filipino workers, who consider them as a must-buy along with karaoke sets.

Fr. Joel Eslabra, who heads the liturgical music commission of the Archdiocese of Jaro, hosts the program. With the help of his brother Jerome, colleague Fr. Jose Cresente Amparo and Z100 owner Jerry Lucero, Eslabra has found a way to reach out to people who need truth and insight.

Eslabra said that when they started the music program in April 2006, they had no idea where it would lead. They just wanted to "sell hope" that they could tease out through music.

The Crosstalk formula is simple but it took three months of experimentation to smoothen it. The program opens with the reading of the Sunday's gospel in which four themes emerge, corresponding to four segments in the show. Then the songs, 14 in all, are introduced by wisdom sayings or interspersed with witty quotations. The program closes with a prayer and a couple of religious songs.

For example, on its 24th episode, Crosstalk discussed marriage and its ups and downs. Mendelssohn's Wedding March ushered the reading of the Bible text where Jesus was asked if it is lawful for a husband to divorce his wife. Eslabra celebrates the bliss of marriage through the songs "Say a Little Prayer," from the movie "My Best Friend's Wedding," "Somebody" by Depeche Mode and "Can't Help Falling in Love" by Michael Bublé.

Then Eslabra segued: "The great Socrates once said: "My advice to you is to get married: If you find a good wife you'll be happy; if not, you'll become a philosopher."

All marriages, he says, are happy but it is the living together afterwards that is difficult. Quoting Gary Busey, Eslabra said "marriage is the only war where you sleep with the enemy." To mark the difficult periods of marriage some of the songs played were "Killing Me Softly," by Carly Simon and "Please Release Me," by Engelbert Humperdinck.

In keeping with the Catholic Church's teaching, Eslabra believes that whatever differences there are between the couple, "true love will always find its way back and the homecoming could be meaningful."

The songs for the reunion and communion segments include "I Need You Back," by Piolo Pascual, "Especially For You," by Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan, "This Never Happened Before," by Paul McCartney, "The Gift," by Jim Brickman and Martina McBride and "One Hand, One Heart," by Barbara Streisand and Johnny Mathis.

The program ended with Eslabra reciting the marriage vows that many couples have forgotten but priests memorize by heart: "Grant us O Lord to be one heart and one soul, from this day forward for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and health, until death do us part."

But love songs at Crosstalk are not confined to the themes of love and marriage. They are also found in episodes that tackle greatness, purity, wealth, rest, eternity and openness, among others.

Eslabra said they have not repeated a theme or even a song in the show. If ever is it the same song, it must be sung by another artist. "Thus, we played "My Way," in Spanish and "Unchained Melody" in French. Even if listeners don't understand the lyrics, they know what those songs are," he said.

Crosstalk strives to give contemporary songs a new meaning. Somehow the listeners, pious or not, respond out of personal need, inspiration or whatever they bring to it. "It is like a cut diamond, you can look at it from many angles," Eslabra said.

Eslabra, his brother Jerome, and Amparo evaluated the songs. A song could have several themes. Therefore, the three of them discuss and debate about it. But the final say is with Eslabra, who writes the script and ties it up with the songs.

Eslabra, 43, and 16 years into priesthood, had music studies at the University of the Philippines College of Music. He comes from a music-minded family from Guimbal town, Iloilo.

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SCHEDULE

Feb. 10 SATURDAY

- Hot Air Balloon Flight	5:30 AM - 7:00 AM
- AFP Sky Diving Exhibition	7:00 AM - 7:30 AM
- Ultra-light aircraft Fly-By from Angeles City Flying Club	7:30 AM - 8:30 PM
- Aerobatic Exhibition by Meynard Halili and Bill Wright	8:30 AM - 9:30 AM
- Helicopter Flying Exhibition	9:30 AM -10:00 AM
- Missionary HelioSTOL aircraft Demo	10:00 AM -10:30 AM
- Paragliding Exhibition by French and Malaysian team	10:30 AM -11:00 AM
- Light Airplane Balloon Bursting competition	11:00 AM -12:30 PM
- Choreographed Kite Flying demonstration	12:30 PM- 1:30 PM
- Ultra-Light Flying display	1:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- Gyro Plane Flying but Gyroplane Rotorcraft	2:30 PM - 3:15 PM
- AFP Sky Diving Exhibition	3:15 PM – 3:45 PM
- Aerobatic Display by Meynard Halili and Bill Wright	3:45 PM – 4:30 PM
- CTRM Flight display	4:30 PM – 5:00 PM
- Ultra Light Fly By of the Angeles City Flying Club	5:00 PM – 5:30 PM
- RC airplane flying demonstration	5:30 PM – 5:45 PM
- Hot Air Balloon Flight	5:45 PM - 6:15 PM
- Hot Air Balloon Night Glow	

Feb. 11 SUNDAY

- Hot Air Balloon flight	5:30 AM- 7:00 AM
- AFP Sky- Diving Exhibition	7:00 AM- 7:30 AM
- Ultra-light Aircraft Fly-By	7:30-AM- 8:30 AM
- Aerobatic Exhibition by Meynard Halili and Bill Wright	8:30 AM- 9:30 AM
- Missionary Helio- STOL aircraft Demo	9:30 AM-10:00 AM
- Helicopter Flying exhibition	10:00 AM-10:30 AM
- AFP Sky Diving Exhibition	10:30 AM-11:00 AM
- Light Airplane Balloon Bursting Competition	11:00 AM –12:30 PM
- Choreographed Kite flying Demonstration	12:30 PM- 1:30 PM
- Ultra-Light Flour Bombing Competition	1:30 PM- 2:30 PM
- RC Airplane flying Demonstration	2:30 PM- 3:00 PM
- Aerobatic Exhibition by Meynard Halili and Bill Wright	3:00 PM- 4:00PM
- CTRM Flight Display	4:00 PM- 4:45 PM
- Gyro Plane Flight Demo by Gyro Plane Rotorcraft	4:45 PM –5:30 PM
- Hot Air Balloon flight	5:30 PM- 6:45 PM
- Crew and award night party	7:30 PM- 7:00 AM

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority, Regional Office No. 1, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	Location	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Contract Duration (Calendar Days)
Construction of 30,000 Cavans Capacity Warehouse	Mangatarem, Pangasinan	Php 8,531,164.54	150

Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license (Small B) applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis.

The schedule of BAC activities as follows:

	RBAC Activities	Schedule	Time
1.	Submission of LOI/ Application of Eligibility	February 11-17, 2007	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
2.	Eligibility Check	February 18-22, 2007	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
3.	Issuance and Availability of Bidding Documents	February 23 - March.02, 2007	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
4.	Pre-Bidding Conference	March 05, 2007	2:00 p.m.
5.	Submission and Opening of Bids	March 19, 2007	10:00 a.m.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Screening, Security Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification of the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bids and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provision of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation, (IRR-A).

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Application for Eligibility/Eligibility Requirement Forms at National Food Authority Regional Office I, San Juan, La Union, upon submission of a LOI, and payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of One Thousand Pesos (P 1,000.00) to the NFA Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Eight Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P 8,500.00) to the NFA Cashier.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

The National Food Authority, Region 1 reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids and to waive any required formality or defects therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO**
Asst . Regional Director and
Chairman, RBAC-NFA Region I

(PDI - Feb. 10, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE RATE ADJUSTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF R.A. 9136, WITH PRAYER FOR PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

ERC CASE NO. 2006-069 RC

AGUSAN DEL SUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (ASELCO),
Applicant.
x - x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that on November 9, 2006, the Agusan del Sur Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ASELCO) filed with the Commission, pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 9136, an application for the approval of its rate adjusments with prayer for provisional authority.

Summarized below is the proposed schedule of rates and the estimated impact of the rate adjustment applied for each customer class of ASELCO.

Customer Class		Distribution Charge		Supply Charge		Metering Charge	
		Proposed Rates	Increase (Decrease)	Proposed Rates	Increase (Decrease)	Proposed Rates	Increase (Decrease)
Residential	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo	0.8929 -	(0.2643 -	6495 -	(0.030 -	0.4715 5.00	0.0847 -
Commercial	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo	0.5306 -	(0.0053) -	- 42.26	- 0.0200	- 68.39	- 35.93
Industrial	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo PhP/metermonth	0.3682 - 21.00	0.0789 - 3.40	- 42.26 -	- 0.02 -	- 390.50	- (45.73)
Public Building	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo	0.4590 -	(0.1440) -	- 42.26	- 0.0200	- 35.67	- 7.750
Street Lights	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo.	7.6969 -	5.1210 -	- 42.26	- 0.0200	- 35.67	- 7.750
Sale for resale	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo	0.4573 -	(0.1198) -	- 42.26	- 0.0200	- 68.39	- 40.4700

Customer Class		Inter-class Cross Subsidy		Loan Condonation	
		Proposed Rates	Increase (Decrease)	Proposed Rates	Increase (Decrease)
Residential	PhP/kWh		0.3031	-	0.5308
Commercial	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo		(0.2918) -		0.2160 5.4479
Industrial	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo		(0.0357)		0.1275 57.8123
Public Building	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo		(0.4855) -		0.2375 4.8500
Street Lights	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo		0.3278 -		0.4410 3.8290
Sale for resale	PhP/kWh PhP/Cust./Mo	-	0.2988 -	-	0.2247 4.1550

The Commission has set the application for initial hearing, pre-trial conference, and evidentiary hearing on the following dates:

DATE, TIME & VENUE	PARTICULARS
1. February 22, 2007 (Thursday), at two o'clock in the afternoon (2:00 P.M.) at the Session Hall, Sangguniang Panlalawigan Government Center, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur.	1. Jurisdictional hearing and pre-trial conference
2. March 6, 2007 (Tuesday), at nine-thirty in the morning (9:30 A.M.) at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	2 Evidentiary Hearing (Reception of evidence) and presentation of witnesses

All persons who have an interest in the subject matter of the proceeding may become a party by filing at least five (5) days prior to the initial hearing and subject to the requirements in the ERC's Rules of Practice and Procedure, a verified petition with the Commission giving the docket number and title of the proceeding and stating: (1) the petitioner's name and address; (2) the nature of petitioner's interest in the subject matter of the proceeding, and the way and manner in which such interest is affected by the issues involved in the proceeding, and (3) a statement of the relief desired.

All other persons who may want their views known to the Commission with respect to the subject matter of the proceeding may file their opposition to the application or comment thereon at any stage of the proceeding before the applicant concludes the presentation of its evidence. No particular form of opposition or comment is required, but the document letter or writing should contain the name and address of such person and a concise statement of the opposition or comment and the grounds relied upon.

All such persons who may wish to have a copy of the application may request the applicant, prior to the date of the initial hearing, that they be furnished with a copy of the application. The applicant is hereby directed to furnish all those making such request with copies of the application and its attachments subject to reimbursement of reasonable photocopying costs. Likewise, any such person may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable Chairman **RODOLFO B. ALBANO, JR.**, and the Honorable Commissioners **ALEJANDRO Z. BARIN, MARIA TERESA A.R. CASTAÑEDA**, and **JOSE C. REYES**, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 15th day of January, 2007 at Pasig City.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. FRANCIS SATURNINO C. JUAN**
Executive Director III

(PDI – Feb. 6 & 10, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632)920-6401*(632)920-6446
E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph * Web site http://www.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

IAEB No. 2007-001 - Goods
SSS Ee's Rice Grant for the 2nd Quarter CY2007

Brief description of the Project

• Degree of Milling	Well Milled Rice (WMR)
• Moisture Content	14% (maximum)
• Grade Specifications	Headrice – 90% to 95% (minimum) Broken – 10% to 5% (maximum)
• Packaging	50 kilos in light yellow woven polyprophylene
• Labeling	With front & back markings
• Quantity	7,533 sacks

Lot No.	Area Covered	No. of Ees	Quantity	Total Cost
I	Quezon City (excluding Lot II)	516	1,548 sacks	P 2,322 000.00
II	Fairview/Novaliches Q.C.	677	2,031 sacks	3,046 500.00
III	San Mateo/Montalban Marikina/Pasig/Antipolo/Taguig/ Pateros/Rizal/Makati/Parañaque/ Pasay/Baclaran/Muntinlupa/ Las Piñas/Cavite/Laguna	697	2,091 sacks	3,136,500.00
IV	Bulacan/Pampanga/Malabon/ Malolos/Caloocan/Manila/ Mandaluyong/San Juan	621	1,863 sacks	2,794,500.00

1. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM*, through the Operating Expense-Rice Grant intends to apply the sum of P11,299,500.00 (P1,500.00/sack) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the supply and door-to-door delivery of approximately 7,533 sacks of Freshly Milled Premium Grade Commercial Rice for SSS employees for the second quarter of Year 2007. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply and door-to-door delivery of approximately 7,533 sacks of Freshly Milled Premium Grade Commercial Rice. Supply and door-to-door delivery of the GOODS is required within thirty (30) calendar days after contract signing/receipt of purchase order. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instruction to Bidders (ITB).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section I of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure on a per lot basis.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8 AM TO 5 PM

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee based on the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC).

Lot No.	Amount of Bid Tender Documents
I	P 2,500.00
II	P 2,500.00
III	P 2,500.00
IV	P 2,500.00

If the bidder opted to participate in more than one (1) lot, the bidder shall pay corresponding to the total cost of the bidding documents for all the lots it intended to participate

The method of payment will be on a cash basis/manager's check payable to SSS to be paid at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg. Ground floor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative

6. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *February 26, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.*, Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Building on *March 12, 2007 not later than 2:00 p.m.* All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in a form and amount indicated in the Bid Tender Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be on *March 12, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.*, Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address given.

9. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bid and Awards Committee
The Secretariat
6th Floor, SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel # 922-2991; 924-7380; 920-6401 local 5491
Email – bac@sss.gov.ph
Facsimile number – (02) 924-7380

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI - Feb. 10, 2007)

Misamis Oriental leftist killed; 272nd victim

From page A1

Salay police chief Insp. Joserico Dayo said that witnesses saw seven men arriving in a van outside Gandinao's house in Barangay Tagongtong but could not see their faces because it was dark.

One of them barged into the house and fired on Gandinao, who was taking supper with his wife and three grandchildren.

"Gandinao's wife said they heard the men arriving but thought they were visitors. Then, suddenly, she heard shots, and saw her husband fall," Dayo told the INQUIRER.

The attackers fled as Gandinao's terrified family cried for help, he said. He said the men did not even bother to wear bonnets, which gunmen in many of the previous killings had used to hide their identities.

'State-sponsored attacks'

Gandinao died from four gunshot wounds.

The Philippine National Police has ordered its Task Force Usig to "fast-track" its investigation into the killing.

Human rights groups have listed more than 800 militants killed under the Arroyo administration. The INQUIRER tally is based on accounts published by this newspaper involving direct attacks on the persons of the activists, such as in ambushes, and does not include civilians killed in the crossfire.

Bayan Muna said in a statement that Gandinao was the latest victim of what it claimed was state-sponsored attacks on militants.

"Political killing is a national policy as evident in the Armed Forces of the Philippines' 'Know the Enemy Part 2'. We abhor the bloody attacks against the activists," Robert de Castro of the Bayan Muna national office said, apparently referring to the video produced by the military.

On motorcycles again

A fact-finding panel created by Ms Arroyo, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo, had recommended that certain military officers be held responsible for the extrajudicial killings in their respective areas.

Cristobal, 38, was waiting for a ride home in front of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) office along the Aguinaldo Highway in Cavite at around 2 p.m. when the motorcycle-riding men shot him three times.

In April last year, Cristobal, past president of a union at the Japanese semiconductor firm Emi-Yazaki and an official of the Solidarity of Cavite Workers (SCW), was critically shot by an Imus policeman.

The policeman, who was also wounded in the incident, said it was Cristobal who tried to kill him.

In a phone interview, Cristobal said he was with five other people and had just attended a hearing on a physical injuries case he filed against his former coworkers when the incident happened.

"I was just lucky to survive. The guns of my attackers apparently jammed after shooting at me," he said.

Cristobal said he ran toward the office of his lawyer and hid there.

Mock coffins

About 50 protesters yesterday gathered outside the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency to protest the almost weekly killings, carrying mock coffins and photographs of dead victims.

They held placards reading, "The world should know" and "End the act of impunity."

The Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates welcomed Alston's visit, but expressed concern that putting National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales in charge of the visit was "an attempt of the Philippine government to cover up state responsibility over the widespread, systematic and organized pattern of extrajudicial killings."

Gonzales has downplayed the killings as a result of an internal purge within the communist movement.

EU appeal

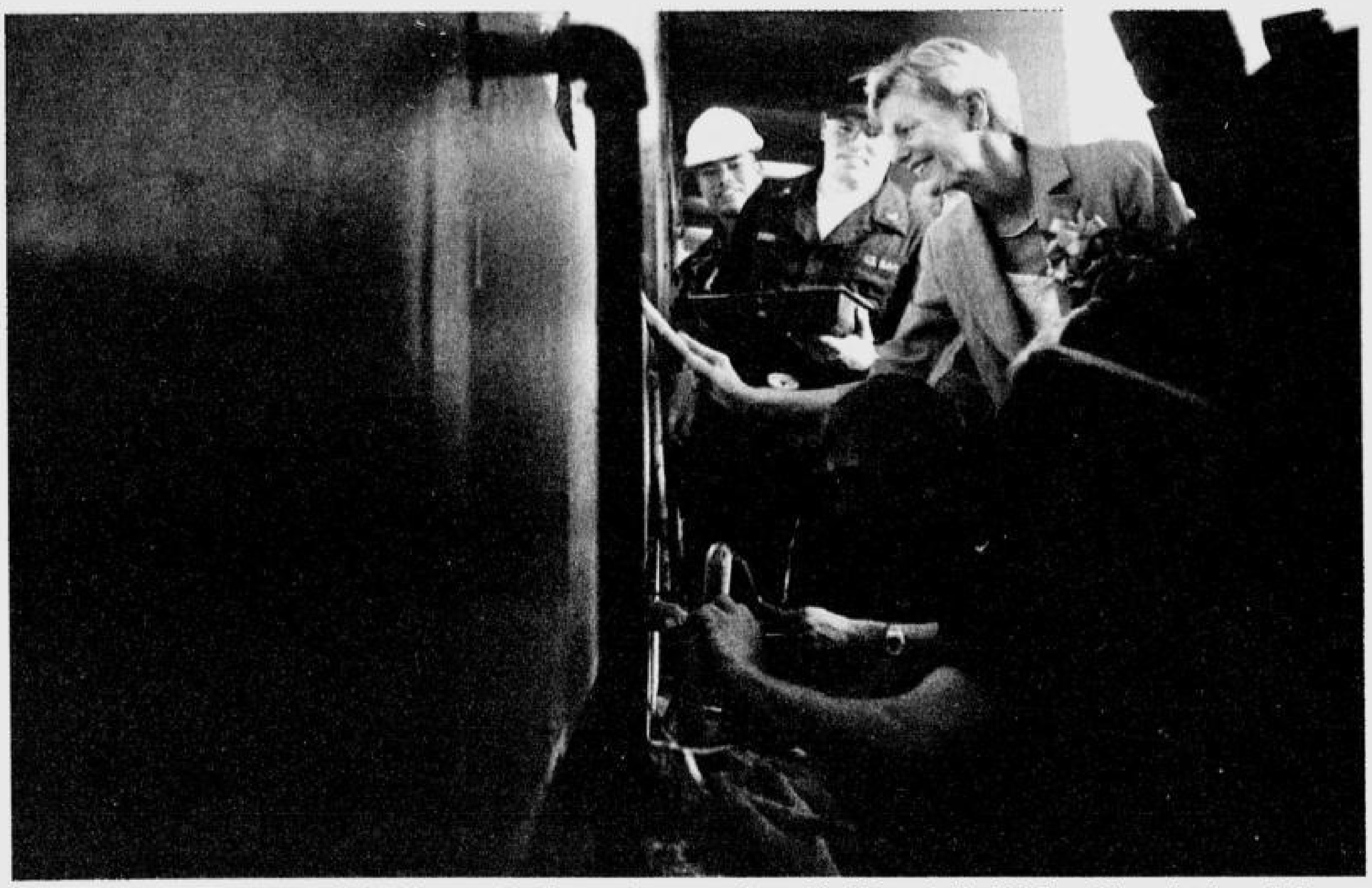
Last month, the European Union called on the Arroyo administration to act against the murder of hundreds of political activists and journalists and said it hoped a probe into the killings would have a "satisfying conclusion."

"We just hope that it will stop one day," Axel Weishaupt, Germany's ambassador to the Philippines, has said.

"It's bad to the reputation of this country. We really hope that measures are taken to bring it to an end."

Ms Arroyo has denied any official involvement in the killings—often carried out in daylight by masked men on motorbikes. Victims' families largely boycotted the Melo inquiry, saying it was designed to clear the military and police of any blame.

Amnesty International said the series of killings was an embarrassment to the Philippines as a constitutional democracy. *With reports from PDI Research and AP*



GOODWILL MISSION: US envoy Kristie Kenney with officers and crew members of the US naval ship, USS Blue Ridge, paint the wall of a school room at Manila High School as part of the community improvement projects of the ship.

EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA walks out of Inquirer interview

From page A1

She left in a huff after saying brief "thank yous" to her guests that included newly appointed Presidential Chief of Staff Joey Salceda, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and IMF country representative Reza Baquir.

A few minutes after leaving through the back door, the President came back and approached the INQUIRER with her answer: "We will not grow rich by pulling the rich down but by pulling the poor up. We should bring up everybody ... spread the wealth that way. That's my answer to you." Then she made another quick exit.

Least accessible

The President has been known to have similar outbursts since she rose to power in 2001.

She is believed to be the least accessible of all Philippine presidents, preferring to let her Cabinet men—specifically Bunye, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and former Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor—to explain and defend her government.

Bunye had informed the INQUIRER about the interview just a few hours before the 2:30 p.m. roundtable discussion—the regular television forum where the President would elaborate on her policies and about her accomplishments, giving strict orders that no political questions should be asked.

Nothing negative, please

The INQUIRER complied with Bunye's request but the President apparently wanted the questions limited to the topic of the roundtable discussion which covered the country's exit from the IMF monitoring program and the economic gains under her administration.

During the interview, the President was clearly in no mood to talk about negative things about her government.

When asked what she thought was her biggest frustration for the economy, she replied: "I don't talk about frustration, I only talk about blessings," and she gave a hearty laugh.

When pressed to explain why the blessings from an impressive economic growth have not trickled down to the masses, the President pointed to her guest, a small-scale entrepreneur, who related how the costs of running her canteen had gone down.

Neri then pointed out that inflation had fallen to a six-year low last month.

Pro-poor programs

The President said the reason these benefits were not reflected in the surveys—which often showed the lingering poverty and rate of hunger in the country—was because "you guys (media) keep writing the negative things."

She added and not without a twinge of exasperation: "I wish you would write how the jeepney fare has gone down by 50 centavos and how gasoline prices have gone down several times—things like that."

She was defensive about the country's economic performance, saying: "It's only now that the economy has finally turned the corner and it's only this year that the economic reforms have allowed us to finance all the things we need—infrastructure to bring in investments and jobs that people need."

She said her government was concentrating on pro-poor programs because of criticisms that too much wealth was concentrated on too few people.

The President, however, was optimistic that her economic policies, specifically heavy spending on infrastructure using increased revenues from her tax program, would deliver the goods before her term expires in 2010.

Comelec bans kissing, hugging of candidates

From page A1

during office hours to meet/mob senatorial wannabes—usually accompanied by a posse of celebrity supporters—when they file their certificates of candidacy.

"It has been observed that many officials and employees of the commission go out of their offices just to ogle, if not virtually mob some personalities during the filing," Comelec executive director Pio Jose Joson said in his "very urgent" memorandum to all Comelec personnel.

"Some female Comelec personnel became unruly in trying to hug or kiss the candidate and to have photographs taken with them," Joson said, recalling the behavior of some employees when Navy officer Antonio Trillanes, Sorsogon Rep. Francis "Chiz" Escudero and former Sen. Gringo Honasan filed their senatorial candidacies early this week.

Also mobbed recently were: broadcast journalist and vice presidential hopeful Loren Legarda; actress and FPJ widow Susan Roces, who accompanied Escudero file his certificate; former President Corazon Aquino, TV host Kris Aquino and husband basketball player James Yap, who all accompanied Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

'Unbecoming of adults'

"[They] even shrieked. Such behavior is unbecoming of adults. [This] is not the proper decorum for a public officer and government employee," Joson said.

Joining the crowd of fans and well-wishers were employees from the Bureau of Treasury, the Intramuros Administration and other government and private agencies in the Palacio del Gobernador in Intramuros, which houses most of the Comelec's offices.

Candidates for senator file their certificates at the Comelec law department at the eighth floor of the Palacio.

Joson said many employees were outside their offices for almost an hour disrupting Comelec operations. This, he said, constituted a "virtual" abandonment of ongoing work, which violated civil service rules and the code of conduct and ethical standards for Comelec employees.

"Verily and inherently, we can be supportive of any aspirant for elective public office, but it should not be manifested publicly to avoid shadows of public doubt in our capacity to maintain neutral actions and decisions during the entire electoral process," Joson said.

"Let us dutifully perform our duties and focus on our preparations," added the official, whose office is located in the old Comelec building, south of the Palacio.

When is Goma coming?

Monday is the deadline for the filing of candidacies for senator and many government employees often ask reporters when actors Richard Gomez and Edu Manzano, as well as Senators Ralph Recto and Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan would file their certificates.

They are all hoping that Gomez would bring his wife, TV personality Lucy Torres, Recto would arrive with his wife, actress and Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos, and Pangilinan would show up with his wife, actress and TV host Sharon Cuneta.

Two more individuals filed their certificates of candidacy for senator yesterday: Senining Loreto Jr., 33, of Caloocan City, and former BusinessWorld columnist Wilhelmina Orozco, 56, of Quezon City.

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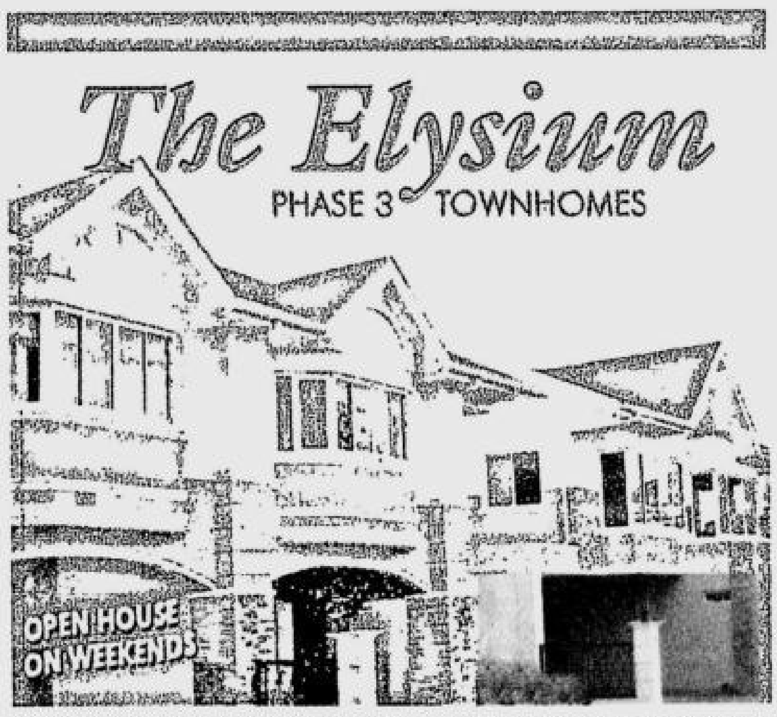

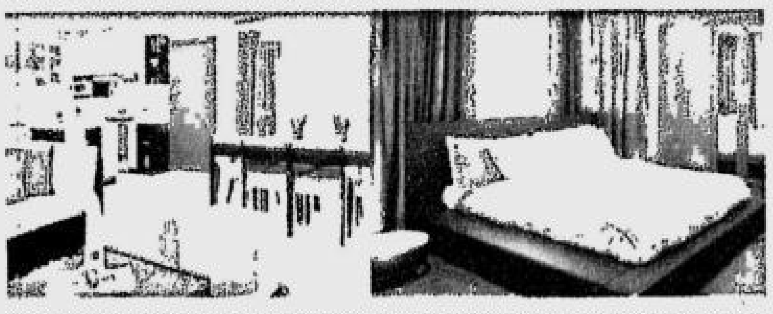

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Branch Manager of the Year
Irene B. Mendoza

Agency Builder of the Year
Zaldy S. Chua

Branch Builder of the Year
Irene B. Mendoza

HALL OF FAME AWARDEES

AM
Alfonso V. Ligayo

BM
Irene B. Mendoza

REGIONAL ROOKIE CHAMPIONS

UNDERWRITER

Greater Luzon Region

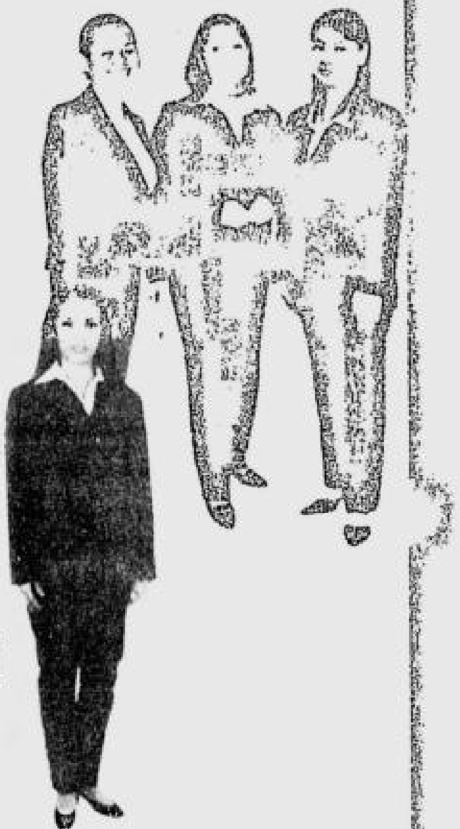
CHAMPION
Marri Lanie B. Salando

1st RUNNER UP
Janet S. Tan

AGENCY MANAGER

Greater Luzon
Lielanie A. Paragas

REGIONAL CHAMPIONS



UNDERWRITER

Metro Manila Region

CHAMPION
Carmela V. Novales

1st RUNNER UP
Teresita S. Sevilla

2nd RUNNER UP
Marlyn S. De Belen

Greater Luzon Region

CHAMPION
Marianne Michelle S. Ramirez

AGENCY MANAGER

Greater Luzon

CHAMPION
Zaldy S. Chua

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New Business Contest

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DIAMOND
Lydia O. Putan

GOLD
Marianne Michelle S. Ramirez
Marlyn S. De Belen

QUALITY BUSINESS AWARDEES

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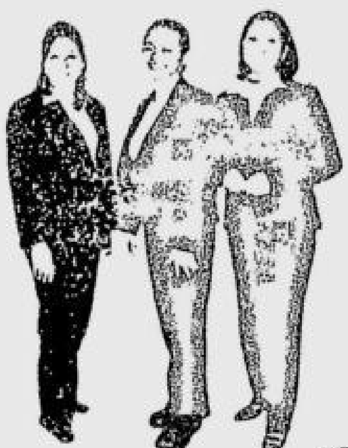
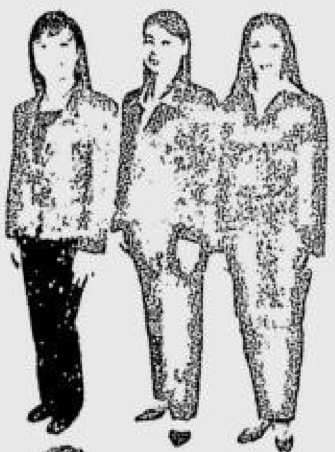
Francisca I. Ligayo
Marcial Z. Dizon, Jr.
Lucia A. Soliman
Gloria U. Fernandez
Donna Marie T. Baldeviso
Marietta A. Chua
Ana T. Somera
Marlyn S. De Belen
Teresita S. Sevilla
Noemi G. Catral
Ma. Cecilia L. De Mesa
Daniel B. Soriano
Ma. Elisa N. Quevada

PRESTIGE CLUB

CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE OF HONOR



PLATINUM
Francisca I. Ligayo
Carmela V. Novales
Teresita S. Sevilla



DIAMOND
Merceliza L. Ku
Marlyn S. De Belen
Marianne Michelle S. Ramirez

GOLD
Lorelei B. Evangelista
Marcial Z. Dizon, Jr.
Marri Lanie B. Salando
Janet S. Tan
Noemi G. Catral
Daniel B. Soriano
Ma. Elisa N. Quevada
Ma. Cecilia L. De Mesa
Gloria U. Fernandez
Ana T. Somera
Jigger G. Gamit

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE OF ACHIEVERS

AM CATEGORY
Zaldy S. Chua
Alfonso V. Ligayo

BM CATEGORY
Irene B. Mendoza

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Peter T. Credo
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Beermen strike first, whip Kings

GAME TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
6 p.m.—Brgy. Ginebra vs San Miguel

By Musong R. Castillo

GAME 1 OF THE TALK 'N TEXT PHILIPPINE Cup title series was played way below the hype.

And the way San Miguel annihilated Barangay Ginebra last night made it look like Sister Act III is headed toward the same lopsided plot as the first two installments.

The Beermen established control early and never let up, ripping the dumbfounded Gin Kings to shreds for a 118-94 series-opening victory at the Araneta Coliseum.

Lordy Tugade tossed in 18 of his team-high 27 points in the first half built around four conversions from beyond the arc, boosting the Beermen to leads of as many as 22 points in the first 24 minutes for the comfortable win.

The mid-season acquisition from Red Bull was on target the entire night, and his performance caught the Kings by surprise after Ginebra had trained its defensive sights on Danny Seigle and Dondon Hontiveros.

This series marks the third time that Ginebra and San Miguel are playing for a title. Both prior series ended convincingly in favor of the Beermen—4-2 in the 2001 All-Filipino and 4-1 in the 1998 Reinforced Conference.

But coach Chot Reyes refused to be elated this early.

"Obviously, I did not expect the (winning) margin to be this big," Reyes later said. "But despite that, it wasn't easy by any means. This (win) is in no means an indication of how this series will go."

Meanwhile, Talk 'N Text was in control right from the get-go and posted a 124-111 plastering of Red Bull in their battle for third place earlier.

Asi Taulava scored 30 points and grabbed 15 rebounds—his 16th double-double in the tournament—to lead the Pals in the battle for the crumbs.

The scores:

First Game

TALK 'N TEXT 124—Taulava 30, Washington 27, Carey 22, Ritualo 13, De Ocampo 8, Belano 7, Fran 6, Noble 6, Alapag 5.

RED BULL 111—Baguio 27, Villanueva 18, Valenzuela 15, Pennisi 10, Najorda 9, Alvarez 9, Bugia 8, Sharma 6, Cruz 4, Fonacier 3, Membrere 2.

Quarters: 37-30, 63-52, 97-78, 124-111

Second Game

SAN MIGUEL 118—Tugade 27, Seigle 22, Pena 18, Tenorio 12, Calaguio 10, Wilson 7, Racela 7, Hontiveros 6, Adducul 5, Espinas 2, Gonzales 2.

BRGY. GINEBRA 94—Caguioa 30, Hatfield 22, Tubid 12, Abarrientos 12, Helterbrand 6, Salvacion 5, Reavis 4, Mamaril 2, Macapagal 1, Holper 0, Seigle 0.

Quarters: 29-23, 62-42, 89-72, 118-94

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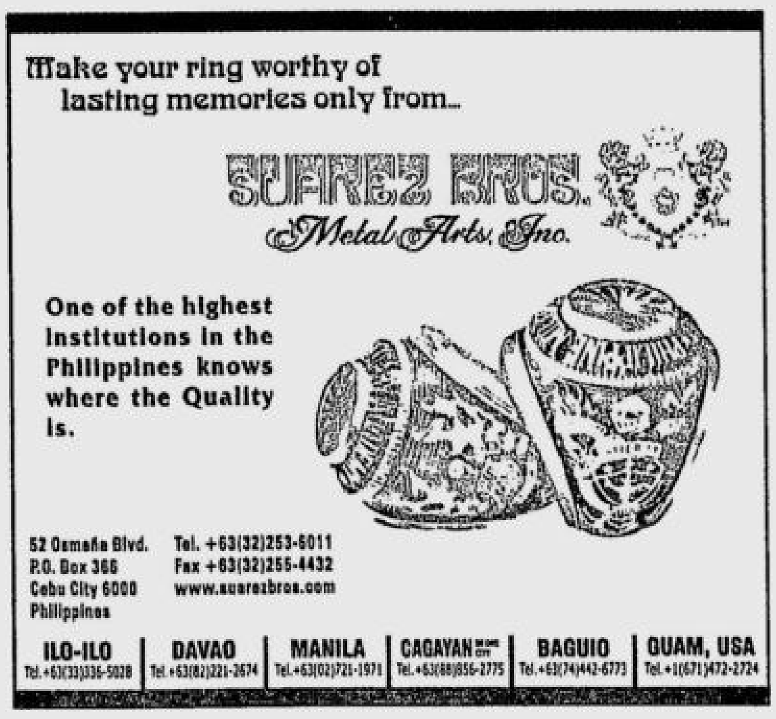
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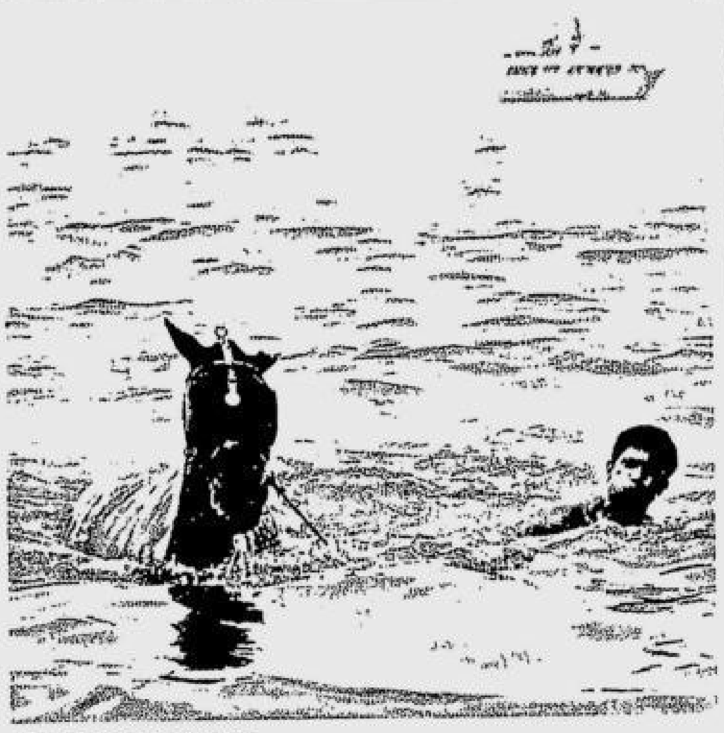
Long wait for water finally over

Main pipe opens Tuesday to benefit villages in Parañaque City



'HEALING' SWIM
Victor Pascua believes salt water can heal his horse Bruce's wound. Pascua, a rig driver, goes for a swim with Bruce for 30 minutes daily in the waters of Manila Bay when he gets a chance to take a break.
EDWIN BACASMAS

By Jocelyn R. Uy

WATERLESS DAYS ARE FINALLY over for an estimated 50,000 residents of two barangays—including exclusive villages—in Parañaque City.

After nearly two decades of waiting patiently for water rations on a daily basis, several villages in Barangays BF and Antonio will again enjoy the luxury seeing water flow from their faucets when the local government opens the main water pipe on Tuesday. The city also marks its ninth year of cityhood on that day.

In the past two weeks, the Maynilad Water Services Inc. had been flushing out rust and accumulated dirt from the main water pipe on President's Avenue leading to BF Homes, one of the largest subdivisions in the country.

The water supply will be sourced from either the La Mesa or Angat Dam, passing through the Balara Filters in Quezon City for treatment. It will then flow through Villamor Air Base where Maynilad operates two pumping stations for distribution.

Mayor Florencio Bernabe said the immediate beneficiaries of the main pipe opening are Tahanan Village, Jackielouville and Maywood inside BF Homes, and Mon-El and Fourth Estate in Barangay San Antonio.

However, the water supply will be limited only to portions of BF Phase I, including the commercial strip at the corner of Aguirre and President's Avenue.

But all the households near the South Luzon Expressway to President's Avenue will be assured of running water by Tuesday, Nelson Lacambra, Bern-

LONG/ A22

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Dengue remains a problem in QC

By DJ Yap

AT LEAST ONE DEATH AND 22 cases were reported in January as dengue continued to be a health threat in Quezon City, the city health department reported.

Last year, the city recorded 87 deaths and 2,253 dengue cases, up by almost half from 2005's 42 deaths and 1,726 cases, city health officer-in-charge Antonieta Inumerable said.

She said the incidence of dengue, a mosquito-carried disease, usually peaked from August to October, the rainy season.

In 2006, for instance, the department recorded at least 51 cases during that period, Inumerable said.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. ordered the city health department, the local school board, the environmental protection and waste management department, and the barangay operations center to start a clean-up drive.

He asked them to organize search-and-destroy teams to eliminate breeding grounds of mosquitoes, including old tires, open water containers, and street diggings with stagnant water.

The mayor also activated the Anti-Dengue Task Force composed of health personnel, barangay residents, public school teachers and schoolchildren, to help prevent the disease.

Their job includes staging a massive information and education campaign against dengue, such as putting up streamers along major thoroughfares.

Inumerable also recommended to the mayor regular "supervised fogging and aqua-based spraying" of insecticide to kill adult mosquitoes and larvae.

Comedian faces raps for issuing bad checks

By DJ Yap

TERI ONOR RAFFY LERMA

STAND-UP COMEDIAN AND IMpersonator Teri Onor is facing criminal charges for allegedly issuing bad checks as payment for loans amounting to almost P1 million.

The television personality, whose real name is Dexter Dominguez and best known for impersonating actress Nora Aunor, was charged on Thursday with violating Batas Pambansa 22, or the bouncing checks law.

In three separate complaints filed in the Quezon City prosecutor's office, Honorico and Ma. Luisa Mariano accused Dominguez of writing bad checks on at least three occasions to pay for a personal loan.

In his affidavit, Honorico said Dominguez, a resident of Barangay Damayang Lagi, made two loans on March 3 and March 6 totaling P700,000, payable in three months with a P70,000 interest.

On the same dates, Dominguez issued United Coconut Planters Bank checks, post-dated June 3 and 6, 2006, to cover the loans and interest, Honorico said.

But when the checks were deposited later, the bank said the account had insufficient funds, the complainant said.

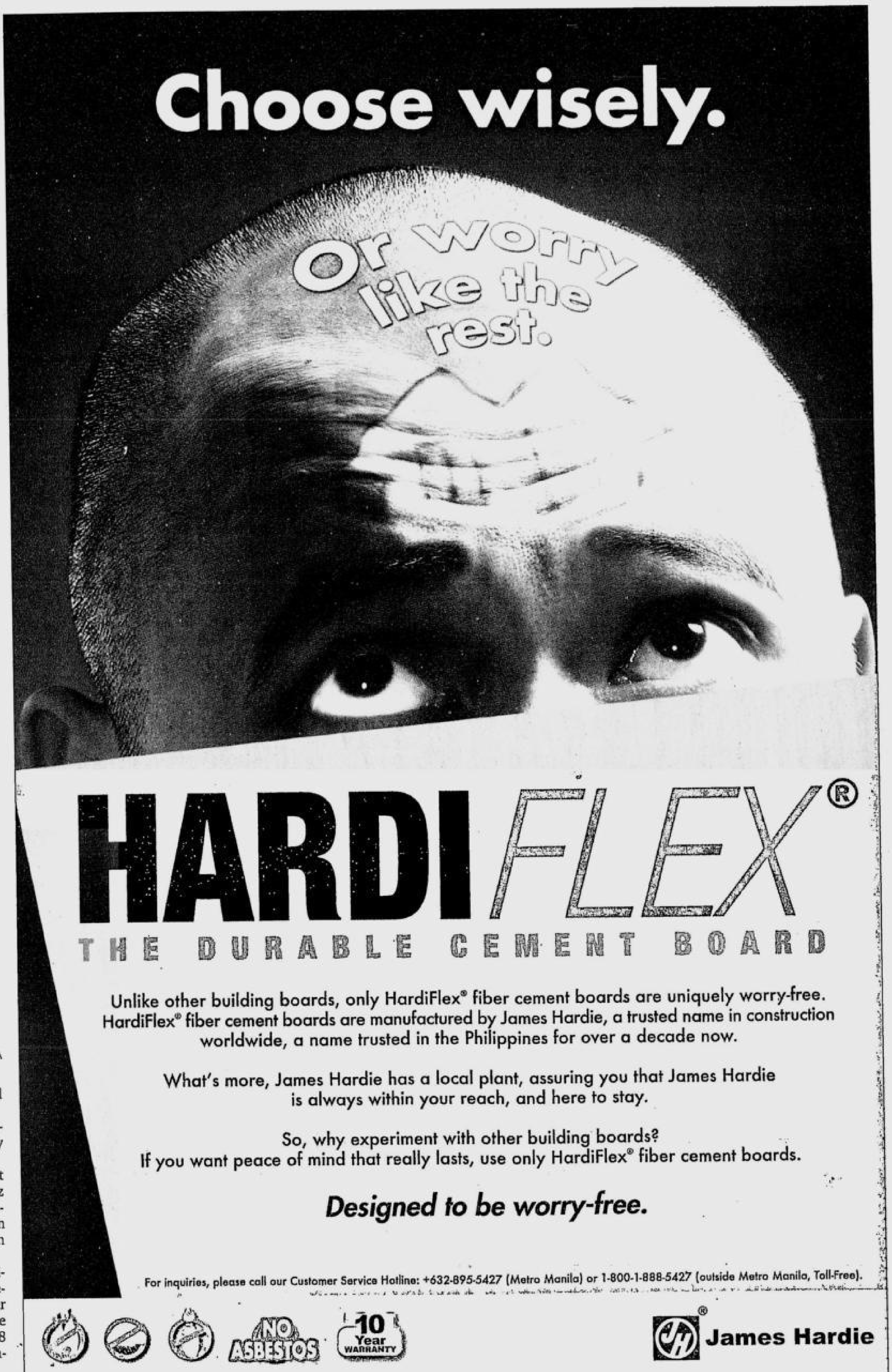
Ma. Luisa said the comedian obtained a P200,000 loan from her on March 27, 2006, with interest amounting to P20,000 and payable in three months.

But the checks Dominguez issued were also not covered by sufficient funds, she said.

The Marianos said they sent demand letters to Dominguez through their lawyer Alicia Risos-Vidal. The last letter was sent on Nov. 29, 2006, but the comedian allegedly refused to pay.

A letter was sent to the comedian earlier, on Nov. 8, 2006, demanding payment for all other loans Dominguez got from the Marianos amounting to P1.68 million, the couple said in separate affidavits.

The comedian allegedly issued a total of 15 bad checks, including the six checks, which were cited in Thursday's complaints.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This Court of Appeals justice is a playboy

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

ANOTHER CONTROVERSY THAT could shake the foundations of the Arroyo administration, especially when it becomes an election issue, is the alleged sale of the Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC).

If the alleged deal is true, the government stands to lose P20 billion in choice property as compromise payment to settle a credit obligation acquired by Marcos cronies from the Japanese firm, Marubeni Corp.

Antigraft groups are aghast over why the government is offering to settle the case with Radstock Securities Ltd., an assignee of Marubeni, when it recently won a Supreme Court decision lifting a preliminary attachment on its property.

It makes one wonder why PNCC chair and CEO Arthur Aguilar is offering to cede ownership of key property of the PNCC's daily collections from the South Luzon Expressway and North Luzon Expressway when the government just got a favorable decision from the high court.

***

A relatively young Court of Appeals justice is a playboy. One of his girlfriends is allegedly a Makati office executive. But what he doesn't know is that the lady is "two-timing" him. She also goes out with an influential power broker. The other man doesn't know about her liaison with the "*chickboy*" justice.

Another girlfriend of this justice, a long-time favorite, is a high-stakes player in the casino. That's the reason the playboy justice is reportedly very aggressive in looking for "deals" so he can support his girlfriend's vice. Among members of his division, this justice is considered "*suwapang*" (greedy) because he corners most deals.

***

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte has been asked by President Macapagal-Arroyo to run for senator in the administration ticket. But Duterte, according to my sources in the city, turned down the invitation, preferring to run for reelection in his turf where he's a sure winner.

Some political analysts, who don't want to be identified, say the Davao City mayor would make an excellent president. If Duterte runs in 2010 and becomes president, we may have another Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's benevolent dictator. A strong but honest leader is what this country needs.

***

The gubernatorial race in Batangas is one big political contest to watch. It's practically brother against brother in a three-cornered fight. Vice Gov. Ricky Recto is running for governor, but his sister-in-law, actress and Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos, is also running.

Sen. Ralph Recto, Vilma's husband, is, of course, supporting his better half over his brother. Gov. Armand Sanchez is running for reelection and is a favorite among the province's poor because he, who has been called a jueteng lord, is generous.

***

Despite his age, former President Fidel V. Ramos looked very strong and healthy when I went to visit him at his office Thursday at the Urban Bank building in Makati City. His preoccupation these days is traveling to sell the Philippines.

Since he bowed out of the presidency in 1998, Mr. Ramos has had more than 300 speaking engagements abroad, inviting investors to plunk their money in the country. The 78-year-old, cigar-chomping former president has not lost his zest for life. He plays golf twice a week although he seldom runs now like he used to.

The guy is still a workaholic as shown by the piles of documents needing his signature on his desk. "My office is like a newspaper editorial office, Mon," he said.

Trader robbed, stabbed dead in Las Piñas

By Julie M. Aurelio

A FILIPINO-CHINESE BUSINESSMAN WAS stabbed dead by three unidentified men who broke into his Las Piñas home and stole more than half a million pesos early yesterday morning.

Harry Lim, 44, died immediately after being stabbed 15 times in the neck and chest in his bedroom at Blk 6, Lt 24 Macapuno St., Golden Acres, Talon 1, Las Piñas City.

His wife Nilda found his bloodied corpse on the floor of the masters' bedroom on the second floor of the Harnil Merchandising warehouse, where they also lived.

Police said three armed men entered the warehouse early yesterday morning. One suspect told Nilda to open the family vault containing P700,000 in cash and jewelry. After the three left, Nilda checked on her husband and found his body inside their bedroom.

Police noted that there were no signs of forced entry, adding that they would pursue the possibility of an inside job.

---

4 prosecutors dropped from task force

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FOUR OF FIVE WOMEN GOVERNMENT prosecutors in the case against the alleged owner of a compound of shabu shanties in Pasig City have been excluded from the task force handling drug-related cases.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, in an order issued two days ago, said he "reorganized" his Task Force on Anti-Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs "in the interest of public service."

Government prosecutors showed the order to the Pasig City Regional Trial Court during the hearing Thursday.

The new list of prosecutors submitted to the court no longer included the names of Anjanette Ortile, Glenda Cabello, Marlette Balagtas and Elizabeth Berdal, who were among five women who originally handled the case against suspect Amin Imam Boratong.

Only prosecutor Eden Wakay-Valdez was included in the new anti-narcotics team headed by chief state prosecutor Jovencito Zuño.

The order delayed for a few minutes the hearing the other afternoon as it was not clear if the prosecutors would still be handling the drug case against Boratong.

Pasig City RTC Branch 154 Judge Abraham Borreta advised the prosecutors to call their superiors.

But Zuño was celebrating his birthday that day and could not be reached, Ortile told the court. In the end, the women prosecutors decided to stay for the hearing, saying the new order still recognized their authority.

"Since we have already started and, by the virtue of this authority, we have no reason not to continue presenting our witnesses and prosecuting the case," Ortile said.

In his order reorganizing the task force, Gonzalez said: "This is without prejudice to those prosecutors already handling drug cases, who are required to continue with the investigation and prosecution thereof, and for them to submit monthly reports on the status of their cases and details thereof."

Delay

But the hearing was further delayed when Boratong's lawyer Raymund Fortun asked for a postponement, saying his doctor advised him to avoid physically strenuous activities because of a suspected heart ailment.

Fortun said he would not want to risk his life. Judge Borreta replied that he, too, had a heart ailment.

The judge decided to go ahead with hearing and told Fortun, "I will take the responsibility if something happens to you."

The hearing ended after almost two hours without Fortun suffering any ill effects.

Last week, the women prosecutors attended the hearing despite being ordered by Gonzalez to seek a postponement.

In an order issued nearly two weeks ago, Gonzalesz instructed the prosecutors to ask the court to postpone the hearing to next month.

But the prosecutors showed up last week, along with their two witnesses, and told the court they were ready to proceed.

Prosecutors informed the court of Gonzales' order but until yesterday, they had not yet sought a postponement.

In at least three memoranda two weeks ago that shocked police officers, Gonzalez said evidence against Boratong was weak.

He also blamed police witness Samer Palao for making the case "complicated" and said a reinvestigation of Palao was needed.

Testifying before the court on Thursday, Palao said he served as Boratong's right hand man in operating the compound of shabu shanties in Barangay Sto. Tomas, Pasig City from 2003 until the police raid in February 2006.

He pointed to Boratong and his first wife Memie as the owners of the drug den.

Instructions

Palao also alleged the couple got instructions and protection from former city police chief Senior Supt. Raul Medina and some of his men, who even provided security during the shabu deliveries.

The former police chief has denied any involvement in the multi-million peso illegal operation, in an interview with the INQUIRER.

In an earlier interview, Boratong also denied owning the drug den, saying it was Palao who operated the shabu shanties.

METRO-BRIEFS

Journalist robbed

THIEVES broke into the apartment of an executive of a media outfit on Thursday, taking at least P100,000 worth of equipment, jewelries and valuables. Police identified the victim as Jaileen Jimeno, the new deputy executive director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. Case investigator PO2 Neil Payos of Quezon City Police station 10 said the thieves could have pulled off the heist between 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. of Feb. 8. Stolen from Jimeno were two Canon digital cameras, jewelry and assorted currencies. The losses amounted to about P100,000, police said

Miko Morelos

Cleofas; 82

HERMOGENES G. Cleofas, 82, of Cabucbucan, Rizal, Nueva Ecija, died on Feb. 7 at the UST Hospital. His remains will be brought to his home in Nueva Ecija on Saturday. Interment plans will be announced later. Cleofas was a member of the Philippine Army's 19th BCT and the PEFTOK Veterans Association.

JRU homecoming

ALUMNI of the Jose Rizal University (formerly Jose Rizal College) are invited to a homecoming at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 11, at the JRU quadrangle on Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. For details, please contact Margie Rogan, 0917-3497730 or 830-8134; Vic Milan, 0917-8968352: Charie Timoteo, 0920-6133367; or the JRU Alumni Office, 531-8031 (local 38).

Long . . .

From page A21

abe's spokesperson, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Regino Cruz, Maynilad business center manager, explained that they cannot service the entire neighborhood because the developers of BF Homes have refused to give them right of way.

Bernabe, however, vowed that the local government would work things out with the private developers in order to provide running water to the rest of the households.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

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The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority intends to apply the sum of ***Php 11,790,000.00*** being the total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for the Supply and Delivery of Various Courseware Learning Materials. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

TESDA now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Supply and Delivery of Learning Materials. Delivery of the GOODS is required within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of contract signing. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through limited bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations, Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act No. 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only bids from bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **ITB**. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his/her responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY DIVISION, 3rd Floor, TESDA Administration Building, TESDA Complex, East Service Road, South Luzon Expressway, Taguig City from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by the interested bidders from the above address and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **Six Thousand Pesos only (Php 6,000.00)**. The method of payment will be in the form of CASH. The bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his/her authorized representative.

TESDA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference to all interested parties on February 13, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at Ground Floor, Learning Center, TESDA Administration Building.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before February 28, 2007. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the following form and amount:

- Cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit equivalent to 1% of the bid amount; or
- Bank Guarantee equivalent to 1½% of the bid amount; or
- Surety Bond equivalent to 2.5% of the bid amount; or
- Foreign government guarantee equivalent to 100% of the bid amount

Late bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be held on February 28, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at Ground Floor, Learning Center, TESDA Administration Building. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

TESDA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders

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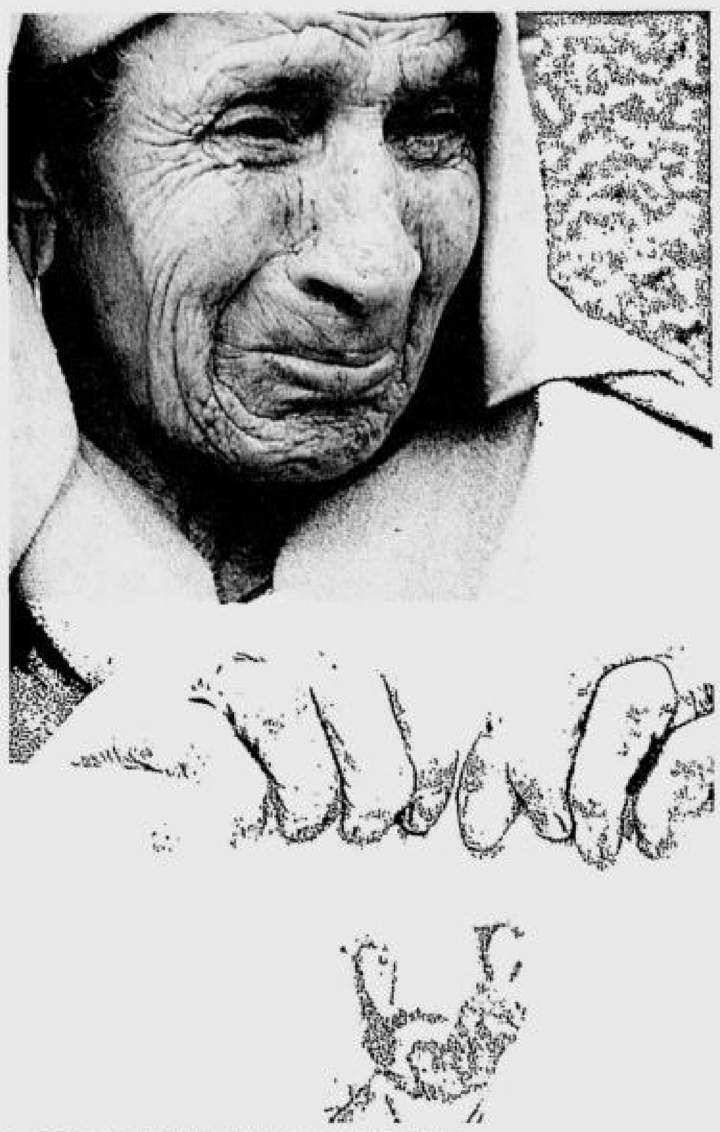

TEARS FOR THE DISAPPEARED

Hajra Begum, a Kashmiri woman, cries as she holds a photograph of her missing son Bashir Ahmad during a demonstration Feb.9. The Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons in Srinagar says that more than 8000 people have gone missing after their arrest by Indian security forces in the troubled Kashmir region since a rebellion broke out in 1989. REUTERS

Palestinian factions sign historic power-sharing deal

SAUDI ARABIA—RIVAL PALESTINIAN FACtions signed a historic deal to form a national unity government after marathon talks in Mecca, hoping to end lethal infighting and win back Western aid.

The document, heralded as the start of a "new era," was inked late Thursday by Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, who heads the Fatah party, and the exiled leader of the ruling Islamist Hamas movement, Khaled Meshaal, in the presence of Saudi host King Abdullah.

A key part of the deal, a major step toward averting civil war, sees Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniya keeping his job, the key post of interior minister going to an independent while Fatah will name a deputy prime minister.

"We have achieved results that will serve our people," Abbas said at the ceremony. "I hope that this will put an end to shameful actions." Abbas asked Haniya to form a new government following the accord, which included a plan for division of ministerial posts.

Abbas called on the future government "to respect international law and agreements signed by the Palestine Liberation Organization," Abbas advisor Nabil Amr said.

The accord, which despite its call for respect of PLO accords contains no explicit reference to Israel, has been named "The Mecca Declaration" after the Saudi holy city where the factions have been holding crunch talks since Wednesday.

Haniya's Hamas has in the past consistently refused to abide by deals signed by the PLO with Israel, which repeated its demands after the deal was inked.

Hamas and Fatah also agreed on a political program, but details were not immediately available. Crucial for the Palestinians is whether it will be enough to convince Western donors and Israel to end a crippling blockade.

The West and Israel have boycotted the Palestinian government since it was formed in March over Hamas's consistent refusal to lay down arms, recognize Israel or abide by interim peace agreements with the Jewish state. *AFP*

Key Iraq war hawk had 'inappropriate' intel work

WASHINGTON—AN INVESTIGATION has concluded that top Pentagon official Douglas Feith, one of the main architects of the US invasion of Iraq, engaged in "inappropriate" activities involving important intelligence reports ahead of the war, a senior US lawmaker said Friday.

Senator Carl Levin said in a statement that the classified Pentagon report was a "devastating condemnation" of Feith's Department of Defense office, which had a key role in drumming up domestic and international political support for invading Iraq in 2003.

The report by the Defense Inspector General concluded that Feith, the former undersecretary for defense for policy, had issued intelligence assessments on the relationship of Iraq and al-Qaida that were at odds with what the wider US intelligence community concluded, Levin said.

"The office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy developed, produced and then disseminated alternative intelligence assessments on the Iraq and al-Qaida relationship, which included some conclusions that were inconsistent with the consensus of the intelligence community, to senior decision-makers," the unclassified summary of the report said.

The report said that Feith's office "was inappropriately performing intelligence activities of developing, producing and disseminating that should be performed by the intelligence community." The investigation into the September 2002-June 2003 operations of the Feith-overseen Office of Special Plans was instigated by Congress in 2005.

According to Levin, the report said that Feith had been authorized in his intelligence activities by former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld or Rumsfeld's deputy.

The report appeared to refer to allegations made by Feith in 2002 and 2003 that Iraq leader Saddam Hussein had active links to al-Qaida, allegations used by the administration of President George W. Bush to link the invasion of Iraq to the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Guarded hope as N. Korea talks eye deal

BEIJING—The prospect of initial steps towards ending North Korea's nuclear arms program brightened on Friday as negotiators considered a plan for Pyongyang to suspend operations at a nuclear plant within two months. A diplomatic source close to the six-party talks said the draft prepared by China stated that North Korea would "suspend, shut down and seal" nuclear facilities at the Yongbyon plant within about two months in return for energy and economic aid. The fresh momentum in the talks between the two Koreas, China, the United States, Japan and Russia came after the US and North Korean negotiators held path-breaking two-way talks in Berlin last month. The Berlin meeting cooled tension that had boiled after Pyongyang staged its first nuclear test blast last October and the United Nations responded with sanctions. *Reuters*

In US, rate of autism put at 1 in 150 kids

ABOUT one child in 150 develops autism or a related disorder like Asperger's syndrome by the age of eight, according to a study released Thursday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study, which looked at cases of so-called autism spectrum disorders in 14 states in 2000 and 2002, is the most rigorous analysis to date of the disorders' prevalence in the United States. It confirms recent estimates, which put the number at roughly one in 160 children—higher than the one-in-200 estimate made in the 1980s. The analysis also found that delays in diagnosis were common: an average of at least a year and a half from the time parents first reported odd speech problems or other social deficits, typically around the age of 3. Children with classic autism have disabling difficulties in communicating, forming relationships and adjusting to change; those with other disorders on the spectrum have social difficulties generally less severe, and in some cases mild. *NYT*

China rivals India on call centers

BEIJING—China is catching up with India in providing call center services, one of the fastest-growing areas of global outsourcing, Chinese state media and a research firm said Friday. The number of employees at call centers in China is likely to rise 22 percent in 2007 to 158,000, while in India the work force is seen rising 16 percent to 312,500, Sydney-based research firm Callcentres.net said. Call centers are centralized offices handling large volumes of telephone requests from customers of big corporations, providing product support and dealing with complaints. As telecommunication becomes cheaper, many corporations are now cutting costs by outsourcing call center services to countries with lower labor costs. *AFP*

Activists rescued off Antarctica by foes

SYDNEY—Two activists harassing a Japanese whaling boat off Antarctica were lost for seven hours in bad weather Friday before being rescued with the Japanese vessel's help, colleagues said. The Japanese crew helped search for the pair, who were trying to disrupt the whale hunt when they got lost in extreme fog in their inflatable boat, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society said. "We called them and thanked them for that but said we are still planning on following (them)," said the group's international director Jonny Vasic. "It's kind of the rule of the sea and we would do the same," he told AFP. "We are not out to hurt anybody and neither are they." The activists had been tailing the "Nisshin Maru," which is part of an expedition to kill hundreds of whales during the Southern Hemisphere's summer season. *AFP*

Harvard's first woman president

BOSTON—Harvard University appears poised to name historian Drew Gilpin Faust as its first woman president this weekend, according to two published reports. Faust, an expert on the Civil War and the American South, was the first dean of Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. Radcliffe, the former women's college at Harvard, officially merged with the university in 1999. The institute is the last vestige of an independent Radcliffe, hosting fellows for advanced research and maintaining a mission to study women's issues and gender. She would succeed Lawrence Summers, a former Treasury Secretary under President Bill Clinton, who resigned in June after a five-year tenure marked by conflicts with faculty. *AP*

S. Korea pardons 430 tycoons

SEOUL—South Korea Friday announced pardons for more than 430 convicted business leaders and politicians in a bid to boost the economy 10 years after the Asian financial crisis. The list agreed at a cabinet meeting includes Park Yong-sung, a member of the International Olympic Committee and former Doosan Group chair, and the sons of two former presidents. But officials said the presidential pardons did not include Kim Woo-choong, jailed founder of the now-defunct Daewoo Group, partly because the cost of salvaging his bankrupt business was so huge. The special amnesty aims "to help create a favorable atmosphere to focus on economic recovery and achieving national unity," the justice ministry said in a statement. The amnesty comes four days after the head of South Korea's largest automaker Hyundai Motor was sentenced to three years in prison for creating a multi-million-dollar slush fund to bribe politicians and officials. Chung Mong-koo, 68, remains free pending an appeal in which some commentators predict his sentence will be suspended. *AFP*

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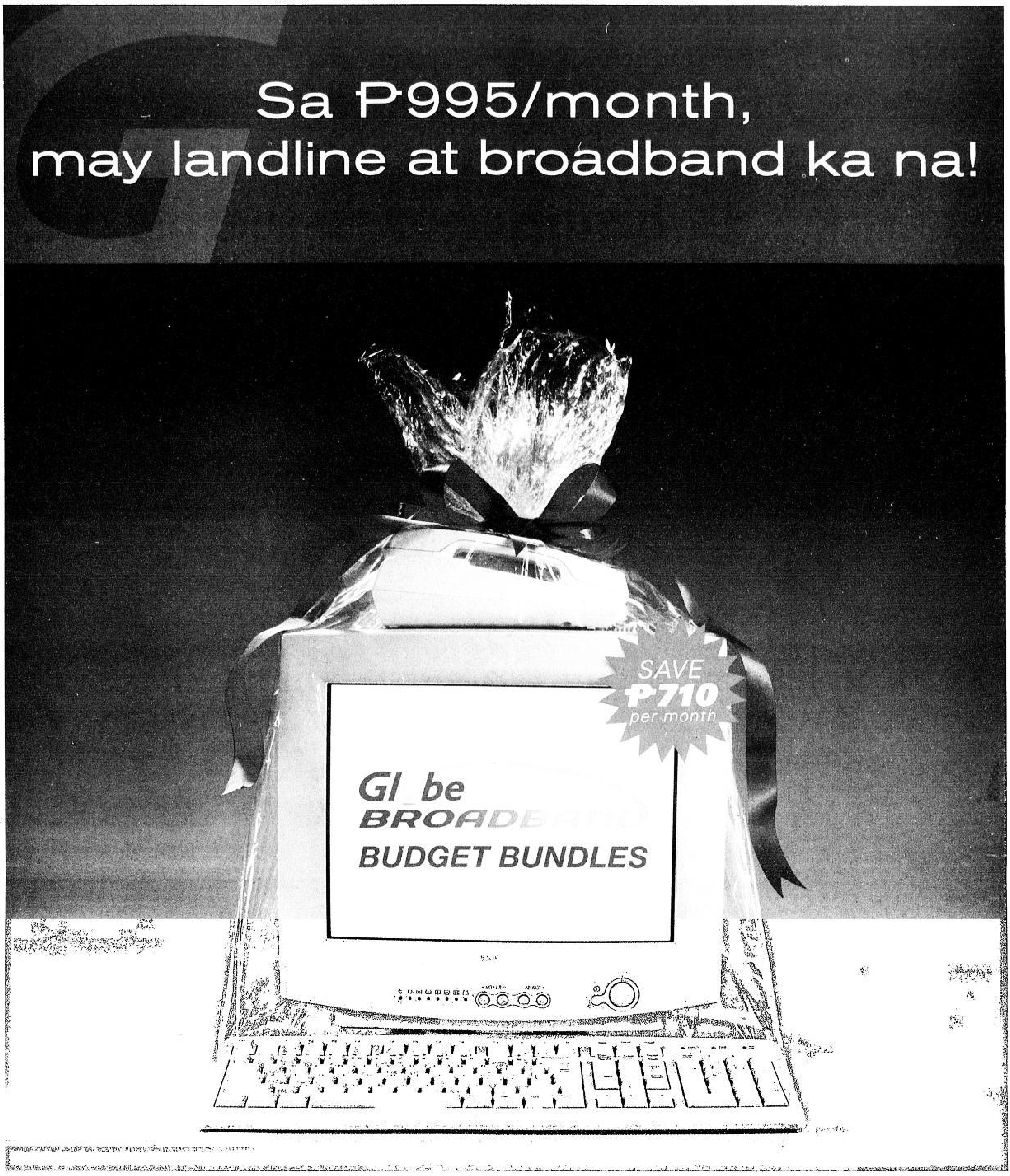

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WHAT'S INSIDE
Detroit's Palace still puzzles LA /A27

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Ferrer-Rimpillo sweeps elims /A28

RP splits singles against Pakistan

Mamiit whips foe but Taino falls in 4 sets

ERIC Taino returns to Pakistani No. 1 Aqeel Khan. Hit by cramps in the fourth set and unable to match Khan's second wind, the Filipino dropped the match. RYAN LIM

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CECIL MAMIIT AND Eric Taino turned in contrasting results against Pakistani foes yesterday, a twist that could lead to a major reshuffle in the Philippine Davis Cup team set-up for today's pivotal doubles match.

Mamiit shone and exploded but Eric Taino bombed out.

While Mamiit had no problem ditching Pakistani No. 2 Jalil Khan in the morning match, 6-1, 6-0, 6-1, Taino got ambushed by Aqeel Khan, 6-4, 0-6, 7-6 (1), 7-5, in the afternoon for a first-day split in the Asia-Oceania Group II tie at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

As a result, non-playing skipper Martin Misa said he might revise his game plan and recall the services of Mamiit and Taino—Southeast Asian Games silver winners and Asian Games bronze medalists—to team up for today's crucial doubles set a 1 p.m.

Johnny Arcilla and Patrick John Tierro

RP/ A26

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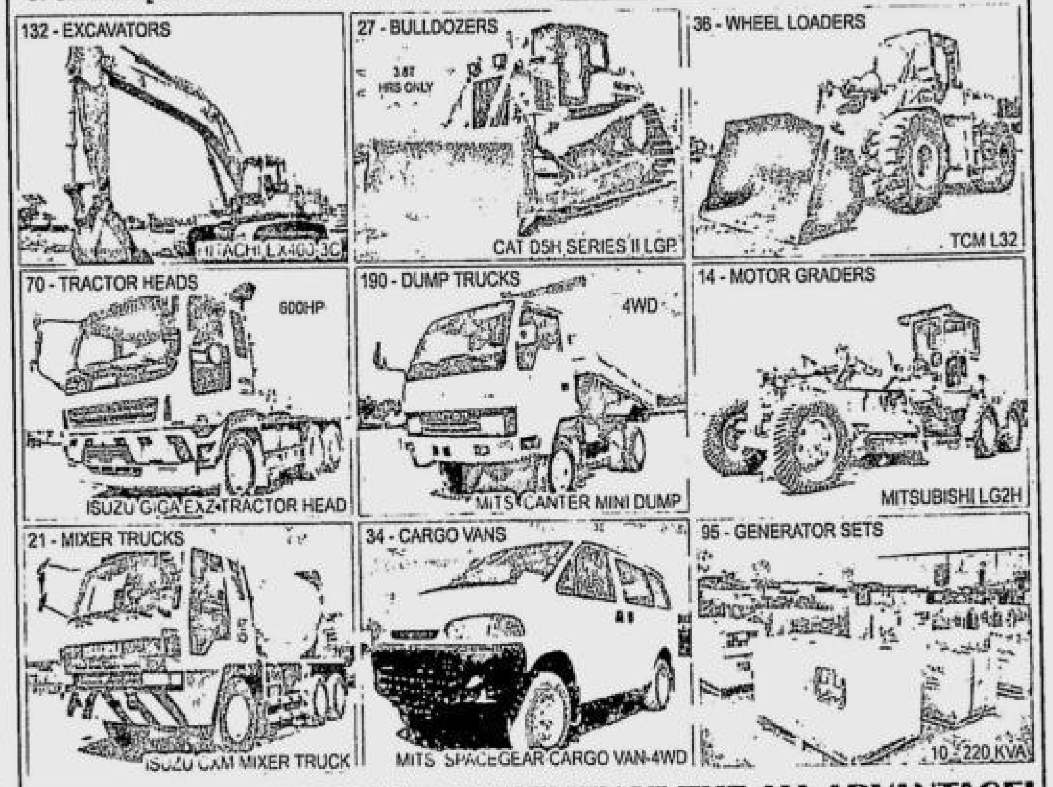

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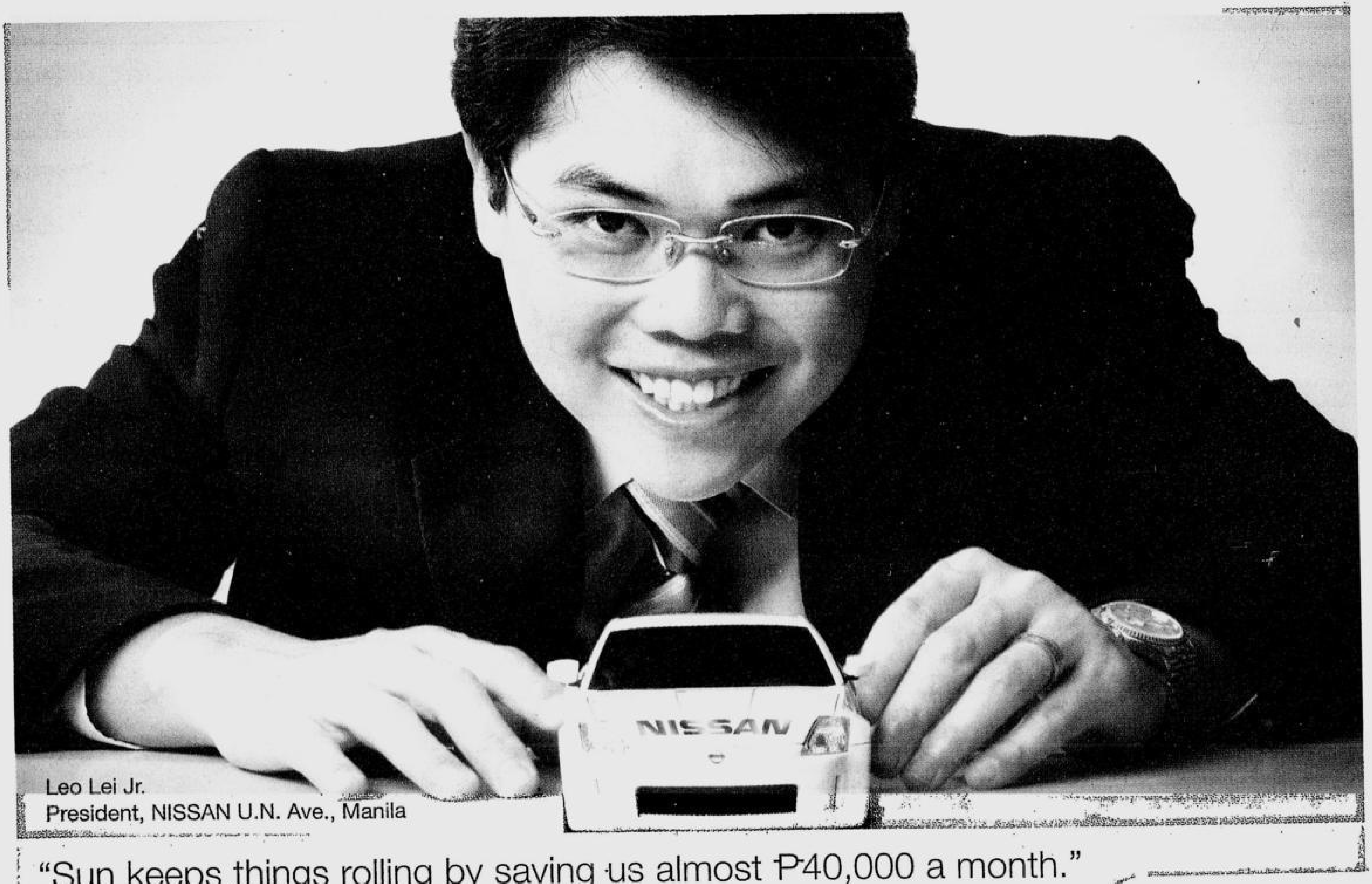

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President, NISSAN U.N. Ave., Manila

"Sun keeps things rolling by saving us almost ₱40,000 a month."

Surprising isn't it? That even the President of Nissan, U.N. Ave., Manila can give so much time and attention to the tiniest of details. Details, which Leo thinks about everyday, surrounded by mini versions of the cars he sells. Keeping track of the small things like phone bills, is one reason why he switched to Sun.

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Cage body plans to field all-pro RP squad

REYES: Rules could change

by June Navarro

THE LONG, HARD WORK STARTS WHEN officials of the newly formed the BAP-Samahang Basketball ng Pilipinas meet for the first time on Monday at the PLDT Office in Makati.

Expected to top the agenda is the formation of the national team, focusing on the plan to bend some of the rules in the BAP-SBP charter to deploy an all-professional squad in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championships.

RP Team coach Chot Reyes has ruled out the inclusion of amateur players in the Seaba, the qualifying tournament for the Fiba-Asia Championships to be held in Saitama, Japan in July.

The proximity of both tournaments will force Reyes to form a competitive team which could jell in a short time. The Seaba is tentatively scheduled in May in Kuala Lumpur.

"The situation is far from ideal. We've got to have the greatest chance of qualifying and yet we've also got to take into account all the variables involved," said Reyes.

Under the BAP-SBP charter, the professional sector, represented by the Philippine Basketball Association, will be tasked to form and handle teams in elite tournaments such as the Fiba-Asia tournament, Asian Games and the Olympics.

Lesser tournaments, like the Seaba, will be supervised by a five-man committee composed of three BAP-SBP board representatives from the collegiate sector and two other members from the commercial sector.

"I don't think that will be a problem because everybody realizes that we have a lot of catching up to do," said PBA Commissioner Noli Eala.

"We have a big task just ahead and everybody's commitment to stay focused is needed," he added.

The PBA board and national team backer San Miguel Corporation will also be in the meeting where Eala will present the national team's plan of action.

"The plan includes three options on the preparation of the national team and three more options on its training," said Eala.

"We have also included an optional package on how the PBA could further possibly help the team," he added.

Estrera-Bayron almost there

Pair poised for wire-to-wire victory

By Musong R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—EDWIN ESTRERA AND JAY **Bayron fired a two-over-par 73 yesterday to take a commanding six-shot lead into the final round of the P1.7 million Konica Minolta Pro-Am and move on the verge of becoming the event's first wire-to-wire winners.**

The leaders from the first round Wednesday, Estrera-Bayron assembled the best round in the 72-hole event despite tough conditions at the Riviera's Langer course here for a 56-hole total of 225, 12-over par.

The 27-year-old Bayron is tipped to nail his third straight tournament after his lopsided triumph in the RP Amateurs in December and finishing as low amateur at the recent Philippine Open won by Frankie Miñoza at Wack Wack last week.

And a victory today with pro partner Estrera will mark the first time since the event's revival in 2001 that a team goes coast-to-coast, a sidelight that will put to the shade the impending failure of the Gerard Cantada-JR Tanpinco partnership's "four-peat" bid.

"We have a slight edge with a six-stroke lead," Bayron told the INQUIRER in Filipino. "But one can never be too sure playing the Langer course. We still have to play it smart in the final round."

Antonio Lascuña and 16-year-old Korean partner Yu Min-jong rallied with a 75, also their best round in the tournament, to take solo second place at 231, with the Marlon Dizon-Bones Floro tandem lying another two strokes back in third after a 76.

The pair of Louie Dacudao, who turned pro before the start of the RP Open, and Kevin Tayao—second placers in the first two rounds—shot an atrocious 83 to fall 11 shots off at seventh spot, in a tie with Cantada-Tanpinco.

The defending champions fired a 75, but the weight of earlier rounds of 80 and 81 pulled them down the leaderboard and left them without a clear shot at a fourth straight victory.

U-Bix Corp. chair and CEO Edilberto B. Bravo leads a list of distinguished guests who will award the prizes to the winning team. The winning pro will receive P234,940 cash, while his partner will pocket P58,735 worth of gift certificates.

Danny Isla, first vice president for marketing of Toyota Motor Philippines, will also hand the symbolic key today to National Caddies' Open standout Mark Fernando, who won an Avanza for acing the par 3 fourth hole in the first round.

Fernando has donated the Avanza to the Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation (PAGDF) through Hermie Esguerra and Tommy Manotoc to preserve his amateur status and so he can still represent Calatagan and Canlubang in tournaments.

Frankie Miñoza's coach Roger Retuerto and partner Michael Bibat shot a 75 for 234, to tie Raul and Paul Miñoza (77). They were a stroke in front of Carito Villaroman and Sunshine Baraquiel who shot a 78.

Artemio Murakami and Brent Sumampong assembled a 78 for 237 and are in a tie with Zaldy Salvador and Rufino Bayron who scrambled to an 81.

BAYRON (left) and Estrera celebrate a birdie. ROMY HOMILLADA

Frankie 5 behind pace after 70

KUALA LUMPUR—PHILIPPINE Open champion Frankie Miñoza sustained his return to form with a two-under-par 70 on Friday, towing fellow Filipinos Angelo Que and Gerald Rosales into the money round of the $1.3 Maybank Malaysian Open at the Saujana Golf & Country Club here.

Counting his first round 72, Miñoza pooled a 142, good for a share of 12th place and five shots off halfway mark pacesetter Chinarat Phadungsil of Thailand. The 18-year-old Thai was at 137 following a 67.

Que shot a 73 for 143 aggregate while Rosales carded a 75 for a 145. Another Filipino, Juvic Pagunsan failed to make the cut anew with a 75 and a 151 total.

England's Simon Dyson surged into contention with a 68. *AFP*

Shin just too good in Southern Ladies golf

ILOILO—DEL MONTE'S CRYSTAL SHIN CAPtured the Southern Ladies golf crown for the second straight year, capping her romp with 50 points to complete a wire-to-wire victory at the Iloilo Golf and Country Club here yesterday.

Shin, who dominated last year's staging of the annual event at her home course in Del Monte, pooled a three-day total of 151 points under the Molave scoring format, including an opening 52 and a 49, to beat Anya Tanpinco by four points for the overall crown.

The Korean ace thus became the second player since 2000 to rule the event back-to-back after Heidi Chua in 2000-01. Lina de Guzman took the 2002 title, then Chua won again in 2003 before Lora Roberto and now US-based JV Agojo reigned in 2004 and 2005, respectively.

Tanpinco, who started the round four points adrift, matched Shin's final day output and finished with a 147 and settled for the Championship Flight crown.

Tanpinco actually led a 1-2-3 finish by the NGAP/ICTSI bets in the group with Junior World champion Dottie Ardina placing second with a 144 after a 47 and Mia Piccio closing out with 45 points for a 140 for third.

Christine Popp of the host club IGCCI copped the Class A plum with a 112, edging teammate Maggie Rivera, who had a 109, while Grace Superal of the Orchard scored 105 points to finish third in the tournament staged by the National Golf Association of the Philippines.

Mt. Malarayat dominated Class B as Maria Oliquino scored a 79 then nipped teammate Virginia Bote in the countback to bag the crown. IGCCI's Sofia Umadhay made a 74 for third.

Josie Amon of Riviera ran away with the Class C crown with a 75, nine points ahead of Tagaytay Highlands' Marissa Vergara, who had a 66.

IGCCI also swept Class D with Kim Jin Bun assembling a 71 to win the title, beating teammates Leny Licera (69) and Susan Divinagracia (65). Tagaytay Highlands-I, composed of Marissa Vergara, Maline Flores Veronica Veloso and Erlie Gamut, was adjudged the best dressed squad.

Basketball pitchmen and their dog Spot

By Percy D. Della

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA—HERE'S CAL Worthington and his dog Spot!

Watch for some basketball stakeholders in the cage-crazed country of ours to behave like used car salesmen a la Worthington soon, if they haven't already.

Cal was and still is known to thousands of car customers, including Filipino residents of Los Angeles who bought from his automobile dealerships during the 70s and 80s.

Worthington made a fortune selling "previously owned" vehicles through outrageous television spots.

Nurturing California's love affair with the car, Cal also went on to become an accidental advertising star while laughing all the way to the bank.

Cal made commercials that featured himself and his dog Spot. Only Spot was never a dog.

It was an elephant, a gorilla, an alligator, and a parrot, anything but a dog.

His trick worked because people are attracted to the uncommon and the bizarre.

Well, with the Philippines' impending return to international cage competitions (what a waste), expect basketball pitchmen in our midst to exhibit unusual behavior.

The pitchmen will employ their prowess for promotion without coming across as completely strange.

And their dog Spot will never be a dog.

They will drip with drama and say the national team is battered from all the internecine cage wars waged through the years.

But their talk will center on a bid to host a Southeast Asian championship anyway.

The idea is to give the team—however unprepared—a short cut, but in reality just a teeny-weeny ray of hope to qualify for the Beijing Olympics.

COMMENTARY

Their dog Spot will never be a dog.

They will say the national team will be honed to qualify. But they will not brag that the team's most recent claim to fame is winning a league in Brunei.

Their dog Spot will never be a dog.

They will not tell you that people with treetop reaches as ever rule the game.

Their shoptalk will be about pride (here we go again), that we are bound for glory.

That we are meant to repeat as Asian champions, much like the days when our opponents were as tall as we were and had just learned to play James Naismith's invention.

Their dog Spot will never be a dog.

The pitchmen will say without remorse that in basketball as in any other sport, there is this eternal feeling that everyone has a chance.

But they will not tell you that in today's basketball universe, whose bigger planets include the Olympics, that chance is slim and none.

Anyway, watch out!

Here's Cal Worthington and his dog Spot!

* * *

Jockey Ramon Guce, the favorite of Bayang Karerista American edition, is currently third on the standings of thoroughbred riders at the Los Alamitos racetrack in LA.

Guce, who was the No. 1 thoroughbred driver at Los Al last year, is coming back from a spill that injured and sidelined him for most of last year. More on Ramon and his exploits later.

Sports note: The St. Pius X Institute of Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, will have a global homecoming on Easter Sunday, April 8. Festivities will be held at the Catholic high school in Cuyapo. For more info, worldwide alumni are asked to visit the Cuyapo USA Association Web site at: www.Cuyapousa.com

RP Cuppers split singles vs Pakistanis

From page A25

were originally tapped to pair against Aqeel Khan and Asim Shafik but Misa said he would "prefer" to field the strongest pair today to take the pressure off Sunday's reverse singles.

"I was nervous coming out here today," said Mamiit, who repeatedly sought solace from the crowd by breaking into a dance on the court.

He matched the intensity of the midday sun and the fast, steaming hard surface with searing forehands.

He flustered the 24-year-old Jalil with a steady baseline game and, at one point in the match that lasted a mere one hour and 11 minutes, engaged the Pakistani in a punishing 15-return rally which he won.

With victory within his reach at 5-0 in the third set, Mamiit practically gave up three points in the sixth game to allow Jalil to hold serve.

Serving for the match, Mamiit hammered in an ace and a service winner, scored on a passing shot and, at 40-15, capped his victory with his eighth ace.

Taino toiled for every point against the veteran Aqeel Khan but yielded after three and a half hours.

Khan, on his 23rd Davis Cup tie, appeared to grow stronger as temperatures rose, hammering shots down the line to nail the first set.

The Filipino led the third set, 5-4, when Khan was given attention for what cramps on both calves. The Pakistani returned to court with spring in his steps and tore Taino down in a tie-break to go a set up.

Taino got ice packs for his left leg at the start of the fourth set, limping to return Aqeel Khan's controlled shots to trail, 0-4.

KHAN: Stronger finish RYAN LIM

SPORTSWATCH

50 teams tee up in Southwoods tourney

FIFTY FOUR-MEMBER TEAMS TEE UP TODAY IN THE PRE-VALENTINE Tournament (Make or Break) at the Legends course of the Manila Southwoods in Carmona, Cavite. Each team in the club's February tournament is made up of three male golfers and a lady player. A Mitsubishi Lancer from Mitsubishi Motors is at stake as a hole-in-one prize. Meanwhile, Theody Pascual topped Class A of the January tournament with 43 points under the Modified Stableford format. Senior golfer Bert Lagaya carded 43 for the Class B title. Billy Gualberto ruled Class C with a 43, Roberto Tan won Class D, Augusto Villanueva dominated Class E, Bob Wright paced Seniors I, Ike Sobrepeña ruled Seniors II, Kwon Young-ja topped Ladies 1 and Linda Wang showed the field in Ladies 2.

Nomads take on SBC booters in Ang Liga

NOMADS AND SAN BEDA CLASH IN THE LONE GAME TODAY OF THE PFF-Ang Liga Pilipina football tournament at the Marikina Sports Complex pitch. Running fifth with a 4-6 win-loss record, the Nomads booters battle the San Beda footballers (2-8) at 1 p.m. in the Mizuno-sponsored tournament organized by the Philippine National Women's Football Association. The other game pitting Candidates versus Sphere, originally set at 3 p.m., has been reset to another date, tournament director Cathy Rivilla said. The Candidates, composed of national pool members, are running second with an 8-1 slate.

Dragon Cup races in Manila Bay all set

THE COUNTRY'S FINEST ROWERS PLUNGE INTO ACTION TOMORROW IN the 2007 Dragon Cup competition in the Manila Bay. Teams from the military and the collegiate leagues are among the sides to beat in 500-meter races in the men's and ladies divisions. The 2007 Dragon Cup is sponsored by Metrobank Card-Boysen Dragon Pilipinas, one of the pioneers in dragon boat rowing in the country. Interested teams may send inquiries to dragonpilipinas@yahoogroups.com.

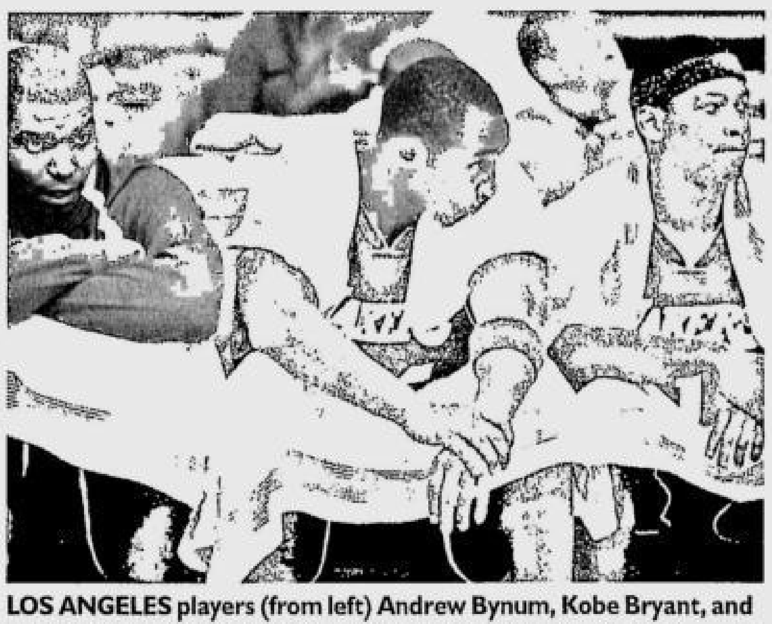
50 fights up in Las Piñas 4-cocker

CHOICE GAMEFOWLS WILL BE FIELDED STARTING AT 7 TONIGHT IN A tough 4-cock derby featuring 50 fights at the Las Piñas Coliseum. Three entries topped the special 3-cock event after 54 fights last Saturday. They are San Rafael, Happy B-day Corregidor and Ace Dealer. A prize pot of P250,000 have been put by hosts Baldo Perez and Vice Mayor Ruben Taguba for an entry fee of P5, 500. All entries must be presented at LPC office before 2 p.m. Meanwhile, the venue's popular Sunday Hackfight Special starts early at 8 a.m. tomorrow due to the expected big field of participants, said coliseum manager Alex Tobias. A total of 136 fights were staged last Sunday.

3-way fight seen in big SJC derby today

A THREE-CORNERED FIGHT AMONG MEMBERS OF THE SJC COCKERS Club, the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association and big guns from provinces sizzles at 4 p.m. today in the LB Candelaria 4-Cock Derby at the San Juan Coliseum. Today's 80-fight program, with P400,000 at stake, is sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Among those invited by hosts Capt. Ducar Dimayuga and Muroy Dolorico are Joey and Buboy delos Santos, Ramon Mancenares, Boy Royo, Pol Estrellado, Patrick Antonio, Tony Lasala, Butchoy Olano, Lito Roque, Eric dela Rosa, Dodie Villarubio, Emil Chua, Mayor Wawao Ramos, Mauro Prieto, Louie Cua, Boy de Roca and Totoy Haruta.

Jackson's Lakers lose temper in loss to Pistons



LOS ANGELES players (from left) Andrew Bynum, Kobe Bryant, and Smush Parker watch the Lakers' latest defeat from the bench. AP

AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN—BEFORE THE Lakers set out on this eight-game road trip, their longest since December 1989, coach Phil Jackson framed it for his team in terms of bringing them together or tearing them apart.

After watching the scene that unfolded on the bench between the third and fourth quarters of Thursday night's 93-78 loss to the Detroit Pistons, it was hard not to conclude that the Lakers were coming apart at the seams.

Already beaten by the Pistons, the Lakers were broken when forward Brian Cook engaged in a furious shouting match with assistant coach Brian Shaw after Jackson removed Cook from the game for a perceived act of insubordination.

Jackson called for Cook to check in for Lamar Odom with 1:25 left in the third quarter, then removed him immediately after he believed Cook intentionally deposited his warm-up top in the coach's lap on his way to the scorer's table.

Jackson sent Andrew Bynum to replace Cook, who returned to the bench without playing a second. Once the quarter ended, Cook blew up during the timeout and Odom had to step in to keep him and Shaw separated.

"We talked about it just now after the game and he apologized," Jackson said. "That's not in character for Brian to do that but he's frustrated. He hasn't been playing in the regular rotation now. There's some things that's about that that's not unnatural."

Ever since Odom returned from a sprained knee ligament, Cook has struggled to find playing time. He signed a three-year, $10.5 million contract extension before the season opener, started 17 games while Odom was injured but after Thursday has not played in three of six games on this trip.

"Anybody who knows me, they know I'm passionate about the game to the fullest extent," Cook said. "I practice hard, I play hard, I work hard in the summer. I love my teammates. I'm a team player. I think (Jackson) knows that about me.

"I met with him afterwards and we settled it. I told him I didn't mean to do it. He said that he wants to do what's best for me. He's going to use me at the times he wants to use me. That's what I have to deal with is him using me the way he wants to.

"I've dealt with it all year. I've dealt with it for three years. It's nothing new for me."

Cook also had a heated discussion with trainer Gary Vitti during a timeout with 8:58 left. He rejoined the huddle during timeouts but did not play even as the Lakers trailed by as many as 20 points in the quarter.

"You just try to nullify the situation," Shaw said. "There's always points in a game where your emotions get high. Sometimes you do or say things that you don't necessarily mean but you get caught up in the moment." *NY-Times News Service*

Mosley, Collazo eye M'weather welter belt

LAS VEGAS—LUIS COLLAZO WILL TRY TO get back in welterweight world title mix on Saturday when he takes on veteran Shane Mosley for the World Boxing Council interim crown.

With current WBC welterweight world champion Floyd Mayweather moving up in weight to challenge WBC junior middleweight world champion Oscar De La Hoya on May 5, the WBC is allowing Mosley vs Collazo to be for an interim belt.

If Mayweather doesn't fight the winner of Mosley-Collazo later in 2007 for whatever reason, the interim champion would then be declared the full WBC welterweight world champ.

Collazo lost a narrow decision to Britain's Ricky Hatton last year that cost him the WBA welterweight title he won with a victory over Jose Antonio Rivera in 2005.

Mosley is coming off of an impressive sixth round technical knockout of Fernando Vargas last July, but Collazo doesn't believe the 35-year-old is the same fighter who twice beat De La Hoya.

"I believe he's about 80 percent of what he was in his prime," Collazo said. "If people still want to think he's the best then it will work better for me after I beat him on Saturday night."

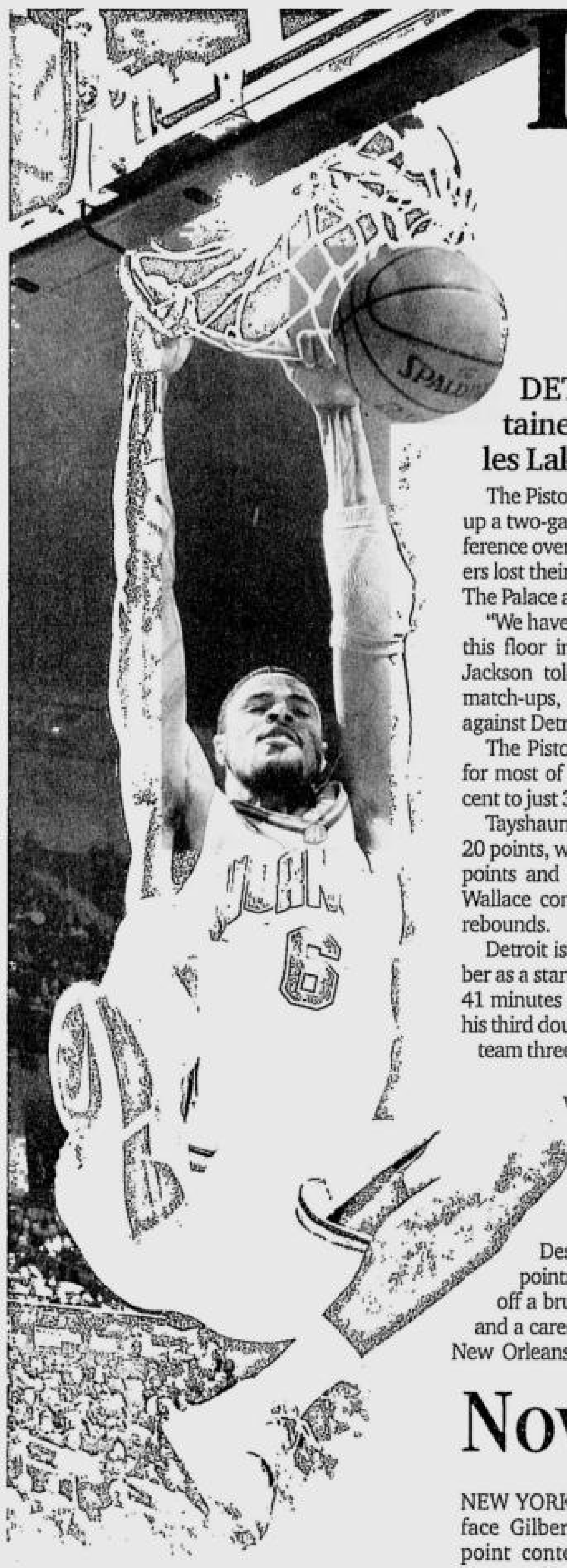
Mosley, who says he wants to fight another five or six years and still wants a shot at Mayweather, said he isn't taking Collazo lightly, even though he only emerged as an opponent after talks with Kermit Cintron fell through.

"Collazo is a great fighter, a great boxer/puncher, and his southpaw style could pose me some problems," said Mosley, who has never faced a southpaw in a pro career that includes fights from lightweight to the junior middleweight ranks.

"He has good foot movement, and pretty good hand-speed," Mosley says. "Each time he fights he gets better and better, so that builds his confidence, the guy's a good fighter."

Collazo certainly thinks he's good enough.

"I'm young, hungry, I've got good hand speed and I'm determined," Collazo said. "This is my time and I believe that it is time for Shane to pass the torch." *AFP*



TYSON Chandler of the New Orleans Hornets caps a transition play with a dunk against Milwaukee. AFP

Detroit's Palace still puzzles LA

DETROIT—THE DETROIT PISTONS MAINtained their homecourt mastery over the Los Angeles Lakers with a 93-78 win in the NBA on Thursday.

The Pistons' fifth straight win opened up a two-game lead in the Eastern Conference over Washington, while the Lakers lost their eighth consecutive game at The Palace at Auburn Hills.

"We have not played a good game on this floor in years," Lakers coach Phil Jackson told reporters. "It's all about match-ups, and they aren't good for us against Detroit."

The Pistons held a double-digit lead for most of the night, shooting 45 percent to just 38 percent for the Lakers.

Tayshaun Prince led the Pistons with 20 points, while Chris Webber added 18 points and 11 rebounds and Rasheed Wallace contributed 18 points and 10 rebounds.

Detroit is 9-2 with former 76er Webber as a starter. He played a season-high 41 minutes on Thursday and picked up his third double-double since joining the team three weeks ago.

Kobe Bryant led the Lakers with 18 points, but made just five of 13 shots and committed eight turnovers, one off his career high.

In Oklahoma City, Desmond Mason scored 24 points and David West shrugged off a bruised hand to add 21 points and a career-high 19 rebounds to lead New Orleans past Milwaukee, 109-101 in double overtime.

It was the second straight overtime win for the Hornets, who survived on Mason's last-second tip-in a night earlier in Denver. The Hornets hadn't won back-to-back overtime games since beating San Antonio and Cleveland in games bracketing Christmas in 2000—when the team was still in Charlotte.

Mo Williams had 30 points and Ruben Patterson added 28 points and a season-high 16 rebounds to lead Milwaukee, which has lost eight straight road games.

West scored off his second straight offensive rebound to give the Hornets the lead at the outset of the second overtime, and Bobby Jackson gave them a 103-99 edge with a 3-pointer from the right wing with 1:42 left.

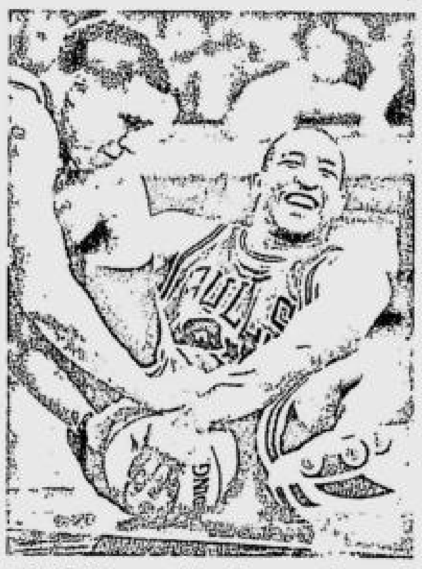
In Sacramento, California, Kevin Martin scored 29 points, Mike Bibby had 21 and the Kings defeated the Chicago Bulls, 86-77, for its fourth straight victory.

Clinging to a four-point lead, Bibby made consecutive jumpers to stretch the Kings' advantage to 80-72 with 2:24 remaining. The cold-shooting Bulls could never get any closer than five points the rest of the way in losing their second straight game.

Ron Artest had 10 points and eight rebounds, while Brad Miller added 11 rebounds and six assists for the Kings.

Luol Deng had 20 points and 10 rebounds and Kirk Hinrich scored 18 points for Chicago, which shot 33 percent and has dropped eight straight games at Arco Arena since 1997.

Chris Duhon had nine points and Ben Wallace had 13 rebounds. Ben Gordon, the Bulls' leading scorer, missed all eight first-half shots and finished 3-for-16 with seven points. *AP*



THERE'S something funny as far as Chicago's Chris Duhon is concerned in this battle for possession against Sacramento's Mike Bibby. REUTERS

NBA TODAY ON BASKETBALL TV

8 a.m.— Denver vs. Indiana (replays @ 4 p.m. & 9:30 p.m.)

Nowitzki, Arenas join shootout

NEW YORK—DIRK NOWITZKI WILL face Gilbert Arenas again in the 3-point contest during the NBA's All-Star weekend next week.

Nowitzki won last year in Houston, beating Arenas, 18-16, in the final.

Jason Terry, Nowitzki's Dallas teammate, also is back after failing to advance to the final round last year. Rounding out the field are Miami's Jason Kapono, who leads the NBA in 3-point shooting percentage at 55.9 percent; Mike Miller of the Memphis Grizzlies; and Damon Jones of the Cleveland Cavaliers.

The contest will be in Las Vegas on Feb. 17, followed a day later by the All-Star game. *AP*

Eagle helps Phil join 3-man 'Pebble' lead

MICKELSON AP

PEBBLE BEACH, CALifornia—Phil Mickelson eagled his final hole at Poppy Hills for a 7-under 65 to share the first-round lead with rookie John Mallinger and Nick Watney in the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am on Thursday.

Whether this week marks the return of Mickelson, until now nowhere near the leaderboard since his collapse at the US Open last summer, won't be decided for three more days.

"I didn't think it would take three tournaments to get to where I wanted to be," said Mickelson, playing for the fourth straight week.

Also clear on a gray afternoon on the Monterey Peninsula was the return of the miserable conditions that have made this tournament infamous over the years. It was cold, wet and windy—known as "Crosby" weather in these parts because of the years when Bing Crosby was the tournament host.

Mickelson and Watney played at Poppy Hills, the easiest of three courses in the rotation because it is the farthest from the Pacific Ocean and shielded by trees.

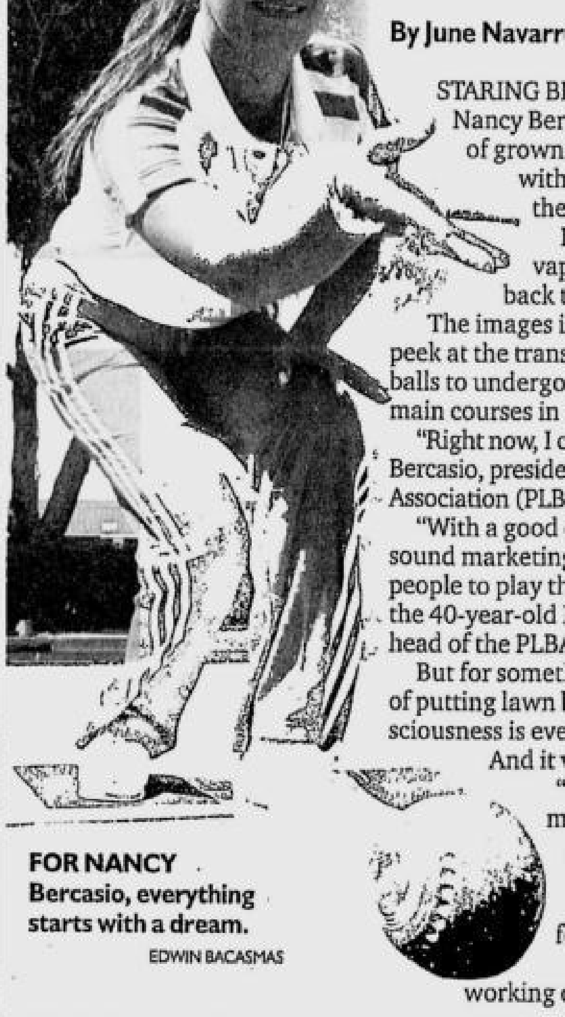
The best round belonged to Mallinger, a 27-year-old rookie who was on the wrong course at the right time. He was at Pebble Beach, which is exposed to the wind along the cliffs of the ocean. Mallinger, however, started his round on the 10th tee in the virtual calm of the morning, and gusts strong enough to topple a tree at Spyglass Hill didn't arrive until he had only five holes remaining.

It also helped that he made 100 feet worth of birdie putts on his first three holes, starting with a 60-footer from just short of the 10th green.

"I got 14 holes with good weather," Mallinger said. "Those are where you make your birdies, so when you've got good weather, you've got an advantage."

He should clarify "good" in this case, because sunshine has graced this picturesque peninsula for the last six years. It was good for 14 holes because the flags weren't bending sideways, the clouds had not released the rain and it didn't feel like winter. *AP*

A dreamer gets the ball rolling for lawn balls



FOR NANCY Bercasio, everything starts with a dream. EDWIN BACASMAS

By June Navarro

STARING BLANKLY ACROSS THE GREEN, Nancy Bercasio has visions of children and of grown-ups playing her favorite sport with a Philippine flag emblazoned on their chests.

In a snap, Bercasio's dreamworld vaporizes and everything zooms back to reality.

The images in her head, though, provide a peek at the transformation Bercasio wants lawn balls to undergo: From obscurity to one of the main courses in the Filipino sports menu.

"Right now, I can only dream about it," said Bercasio, president of the Philippine Lawn Bowls Association (PLBA), on the sport becoming popular.

"With a good development program and a sound marketing strategy that would encourage people to play the sport, it could happen," added the 40-year-old Bercasio, who divides time as head of the PLBA and national athlete.

But for something unpopular, the grueling task of putting lawn bowls in the mainstream of consciousness is every thing but easy.

And it weighs down heavily on Bercasio.

"First, you have to remove the misconception that lawn bowls is a game for foreigners," said Bercasio. "Second, make the playing venues accessible and affordable for the regular sports buff."

For starters, Bercasio has been working out a deal that would put a venue at the Fort in Taguig and another one in Cebu City.

At present, the national lawn bowlers are training at Nomads Sports Club in Parañaque City and Angeles Sports Club inside Clark field in Pampanga.

Led by Myla Witheridge, the top female lawn bowler in the country, the Philippines qualified for the 2008 World Bowls in Christchurch, New Zealand after landing seventh out of 17 countries in the Asia-Pacific championships last year.

Witheridge will play in the singles competition while Sonia Bruce and Rella Catalan will compete in the pairs during the World Bowls where 24 countries have qualified, including perennial overall champion Scotland.

Lawn bowls is basically played on grass where the players launch four wooden balls at a time to hit the jack on a 30-meter long and three-meter wide lane called a rink.

The closest ball to the jack, which is thrown to the end of the rink at the start of every set and resembles a billiard ball, earns two points while the next closest ball gets a point on each of the ten frames.

"Contrary to what others think, lawn bowls is competitive like the other sports Filipinos love," said Bercasio, who has a national pool of 25 players, 15 women and 10 men. "We only need to create awareness on what this sport could offer."

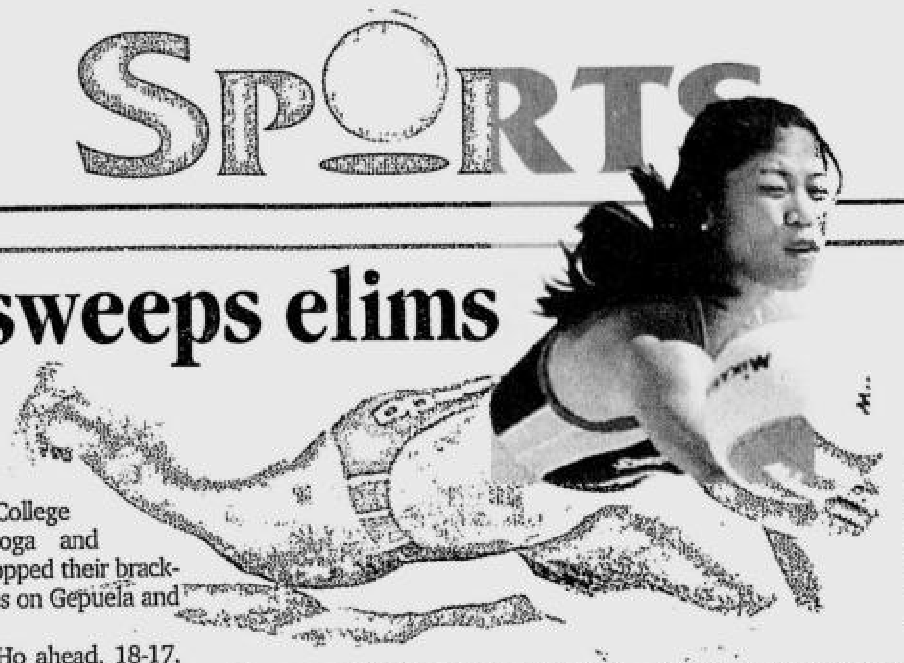
"It's a long way to go. But by putting the foundation, we could achieve something," said Bercasio.

Apart from the pool, Bercasio has set up a grassroots development program which caters to players 12-18 years old.

Bercasio hopes all her efforts will make her vision take concrete shape.

SPORTS

Ferrer-Rimpillo sweeps elims


OLIVAREZ College's Rose Ann Barroga dives to save a ball. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

CLARK FIELD, PAMPANGA—NEWcomers Cherry Ferrer and Katrina Rimpillo subdued veterans Krsitel Gepuela and Kristine Ho, 21-19, Friday to sweep the elimination round of the first leg of the 2007 Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball Tournament at the sandlot of the Clearwater Country Club here.

Ferrer and Rimpillo, representing Arellano University, emerged top semifinals qualifier from Group A with their third straight victory in as many matches.

Gepuela, an information technology specialist, and Ho, an advertising executive, also advanced with a 2-1 record.

Ferrer and Rimpillo arranged a semis clash with Group B challengers Sheena Rose Teves and Lourdes Patillo.

The pair of Olivarez College stars Roseanne Barroga and Rowena Felices, who topped their bracket with a 4-0 card, fakes on Gepuela and Ho.

With Gepuela and Ho ahead, 18-17, the 19-year-old Ferrer scored on a big spike at the net to force a tie.

Ferrer's smash at the frontline later allowed the Arellano Lady Chiefs to gain the lead in the ensuing play at 19-18.

A pair of service winners from Ferrer later ensured the Lady Chiefs the victory.

Barroga and Felices topped Group B with a 21-7 victory over Gel Gepuela and Camille Alcantara, while Teves and Patillano joined them after clobbering Yoni Wasan and Jas Venegas, 21-15. Teves, who joined up with Felices for the second time in eight months, put her team ahead with a smash and a wide return, 13-8.

The event offers P10,000 plus trophy to the winning pair, while runners-up get P5,000, plus trophy. The top two placers automatically earn berths to the grand finals—a Battle of Champions-type of competition at the end of the year.

Corteza rips Django, tops pool 'derby'

CORTEZA

LEE VAN CORTEZA clustered nine racks, including a golden break in the fifth frame, to trounce Francisco "Django" Bustamante, 13-4, and rule the 10-ball Grand Derby held at the Efren Magic Billiard Center in Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City, late Thursday.

Down, 0-2, the 27-year-old Corteza found the touch that has given him four Southeast Asian Games gold medals and surged ahead, 9-2, en route to the P140,000 champion's purse. Bustamante settled for P40,000.

"My golden break in the fifth frame was crucial as it gave me the momentum," said Corteza, who is scheduled to represent the country in the 2007 WPA World 8-ball in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, on March 1-8, in Filipino.

"I'm also lucky as I'm on the brink of losing to Roberto (Gomez) in the semifinals before he scratched," added Corteza, who finished runner-up in last December's derby game behind 2006 World Pool League titlist Dennis Orcollo.

Corteza actually missed the No. 5 ball in the 6th rack, but two-time RP Open winner Bustamante opted for a safety shot. Corteza, however, managed to pocket No. 5 via a difficult shot and proceeded to clean up the table.

In the 12th rack, Corteza suffered his third empty break, allowing Bustamante to cut the lead at 3-9.

Bustamante missed an easy No. 2 ball shot in the 13th rack and Corteza cleaned up the table for a 10-3 count.

In the crossover semis, Corteza edged 2007 The Battle of Scandinavia 9-ball winner Roberto Gomez, 11-9, while Bustamante trounced bosom buddy Hall of Famer Efren "Bata" Reyes, 11-2.

Other renowned Filipino pool sharks who competed were 2006 Doha Asian Games silver medalist Jeffrey de Luna, 2006 Asian 9-ball Tour Taiwan leg winner Rodolfo Luat and 1991 Manila Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Leonardo Andam. The one-day event was organized by tournament director Rolly Vicente, event manager Ish Caparras and Shirley Mananap of Puyat Sports. Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Harbour vs Toyota Otis in no-tomorrow clash

ONE COACH WANTS TO AVOID A MELTDOWN, THE OTHER IS TRYING TO sustain a strong start.

GAME TODAY
(Olivarez College Sports Center)
3 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Toyota Otis
(Best-of-five semifinal series tied at 2-2)

But only one between previous finalists Harbour Centre and Toyota Otis will book a return to the title series in today's deciding match of the PBL Silver Cup semifinals at the Olivarez College Sports Center.

The winner of the 3 p.m. do-or-die encounter will battle Hapee-PCU in a best-of-five championship series starting Tuesday.

"All we have to do is play smart basketball from start to finish," said coach Jorge Gallent, after Harbour tied the series at 2-2 on Thursday.

Just like in last year's Finals series, Chico Lanete has been the pivotal player for the Port Masters. The veteran guard averaged 24 points in their two wins, but only nine in their two losses.

Although JC Intal remains the focal point of the Port Masters' offensive game, Gallent said Lanete's performance has become a barometer of their success.

"Chico played a good game (Thursday)," he said. "He played well when we won in Game 2, so I hope he plays well again in Game 5."

In 2006, Harbour rallied from a 1-2 Finals deficit to bag the Unity Cup title.

Coach Louie Alas, however, believes the Sparks are capable of averting another upset through Marvin Cruz, Patrick Cabahug and Abby Santos.

"There will be no repeat of what happened to us last year," vowed Alas. "The boys are determined to win."

Hapee-PCU wrapped up its own duel versus Mail and More at 3-1 after posting an 88-75 triumph in Game 4 Thursday.

Toyota Otis, though, failed to close out its own series as Harbour Centre escaped with an 86-83 victory.

CHICO Lanete (right): Barometer of Harbour Centre's success. RYAN LIM

Despite the win, Gallent again rued his wards' fourth-quarter meltdown. The Port Masters coasted through the first three periods in Game 4, before Cruz instigated a Sparks comeback in the last five minutes.

"We hope we could lessen our end-game errors," said Gallent. "That's our biggest concern right now."

For Alas, his focus is coming up with a strong start. "We played individually in the first quarter (of Game 4)," he said.

Jasmine W. Payo

METRO

Citizen's Call

Our City of Affections and Disaffections is made up of stories.
Your stories. Tell us all about it.

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- Garbage dumped on your street unmake your day?
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- Are you up in arms against the demolition of an ancestral house?
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- Got stuck in potholes?
- Fed up with cussing and feuding neighbors?
- Is there an everyday role model in your neighborhood?
- Delightful/dreadful finds on your way to work?

Tell, text us about it. With photos, if you will. Share the good news where you are—and the bad. Being involved is the only way to make Metro Manila a safer, saner, healthier and an exciting place to live in.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Triathlon hits high gear as 2007 SEAG nears

SEASONED TRIATHLETES ARLAND MACAsieb and Sandra Araullo seek a crack at another Southeast Asian Games stint when the national qualifiers roll off on Feb. 18.

The 2007 National Triathlon Championship—one of three qualifying races for a spot in this year's SEA Games in Thailand—will fire off at the Clearwater Country Club in Clark Field, Pampanga.

"We are eyeing podium finishes in both the triathlon and the duathlon events in Thailand," said Tom Carrasco, president of the Triathlon Association of the Philippines.

Macasieb, a 2005 SEAG bronze medalist, remains a favorite in the 1.5K swim-40K bike-10K run Olympic distance race.

Returning veteran George Vilog and Mikki Quilala, Hawaiian-based Aaron Altura, and junior bets Joash Serrano, Andrew Gatmaitan and Rowan Fernandez could pull off upsets in the foreign-flavored race.

In women's action, Araullo eyes SEAG redemption late this year after settling for a silver in the 2005 edition.

But challenging her reign are Asian Games bet LC Langit and fast-rising racers Mimi Lucas, Kim Mangrobang and Anna Gatmaitan.

Six triathletes from Hong Kong are also among the foreign entries expected to vie.

Other featured events include an Olympic distance relay race, a 750m swim-20K bike-5K run for young age groups, a 350m swim-10K bike-2.5K run for kids, and a 350m swim-1.5K run aquathlon.

Jasmine W. Payo

'Exciting year for running'

THE POLO TRIATHLON TEAM got off to a good start in its local and international campaigns this year.

Led by team captain Rune Stroem, the team embarked on a holistic program—from state-of-the-art running shoes, an improved nutrition plan, to a helpful training regimen—in separate activities at the Manila Polo Club and the Moro Lorenzo Gym in Ateneo recently.

"This is a very exciting year for running," said Joey Singian, managing director of Adidas Philippines.

Nutritionist Luchi Callanta addressed the diet concerns of the triathletes, while Herc Callanta, dean of the Human Kinetics department of the University of the Philippines, conducted a strength and conditioning session.

TR28 team head Kristen Warren also performed a foot scan before fitting the members with Test Run 28, the new Adidas running shoes.

"We are very excited about this partnership," said Stroem

DEAL SEALED: Polo Tri-Team skipper Rune Stroem (seated, left) and Adidas managing director Joey Singian formalize the sports apparel manufacturer's backing. Looking on are Polo Tri-Team co-founder Fred Uytengsu (right) and Adidas CFO Joel Orense.

Other racers in one of Philippine triathlon's most competitive squads include Fred Uytengsu, Peter Yabut, Raffy Ocampo, Rick Yupangco, Maxie Abad, Andy Aguila, PJ Castillo, David Charlton, Amanda Carpo and Oona Mapua.

"The runners were given 28 days to try on their shoes," said Odette Velarde, marketing communications manager of Adidas.

"If they feel there's no improvement in their performance, they can exchange it for another product of equal value."

Jasmine W. Payo

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Swabe ang dating,
lakas ng hatak!
Max. Max. Max.
New Generation
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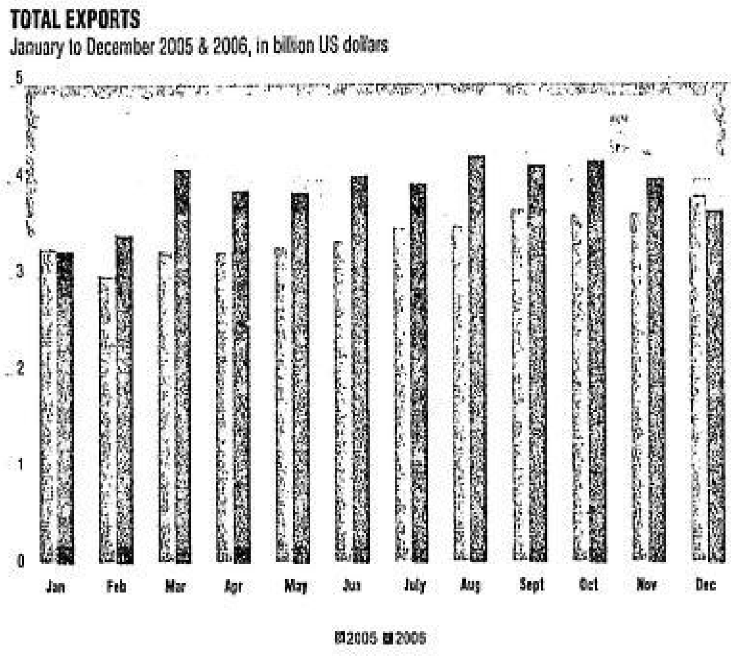
MAX
Above all diesels

Exports jumped 14% to $47.03B in '06



Target exceeded despite 3.8% drop in December

By Michelle V. Remo

AFTER 10 MONTHS OF CONSECUTIVE DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH, the country's exports fell in December from a year ago due to lower demand for electronics and other key export commodities.

The National Statistics Office yesterday reported that exports reached $3.68 billion in December, down 3.8 percent from $3.83 billion in the same month of 2005.

This brought export earnings for 2006 to $47.03 billion, higher by 14 percent from $41.26 billion in 2005. Despite a disappointing record in December, the full-year growth still exceeded the official growth target of 10 percent.

Victor Abola, economics professor at the University of Asia and the Pacific, said that while the strengthening of the peso could have had an adverse impact on export receipts in December, the decline was more due to trend.

He explained that some firms had maximized their exports in November in time for Christmas. He said, other exporters waited until the new year to sell leftover inventory.

According to the NSO, electronics re-

EXPORTS/ B3

Net foreign direct investments hit 5-yr high

By Doris C. Dumlao

NET FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS in the Philippines surged to a five-year high of $2 billion in the first 11 months of 2006 due to the influx of fresh capital into the manufacturing, services, real estate, financial intermediation and construction sectors.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas also reported yesterday that foreign portfolio investments in local stocks, debt papers and bank products—often referred to as "hot money" due to their volatile nature—posted a net inflow of $252.52 million in January 2007 or a turnaround from the $115.47-million net outflow a year ago.

"Investor confidence was boosted by solid macroeconomic fundamentals as evident in the much-improved fiscal position, steadily declining inflation, the favorable external payments position, strong corporate earnings and the upgrade in November by Moody's Investor Service," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a statement.

While net FDI inflows for the month of November of $46 million were much lower than the $96 million in the same month last year, net FDI flows rose by 50.6 percent in January to November from the $1.34 billion in the same period a year ago.

Unlike portfolio investments which are more volatile, FDI flows represent investments in brick-and-mortar businesses that are capital- and usually labor-intensive such as those spent in building new factories, power plants, mining ventures or other enterprises.

Considered the least volatile form of financial flows, FDIs consist of capital infusion in the form of equity investments, reinvested earnings and other capital flows such as loans extended by head offices to their subsidiaries in the Philippines.

The resurgence in non-resident direct investments during the review period was explained mainly by sustained net inflows in the equity and other capital accounts amounting to $1.99 billion.

The Netherlands, the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland were the major sources of FDI inflows, Tetangco said.

The equity flows were channeled mostly to manufacturing such as of semi-conductors, circuits, healthcare, chemical, steel, air-conditioning, cigarette and paper mill products.

The services sub-sectors that benefited most from the inflows were shipping crew training, business process outsourcing, medical research, construction and facilities management. Real estate, financial intermediation and construction also got some of the inflows.

INDICATORS

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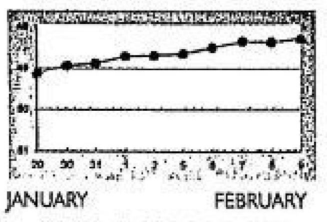


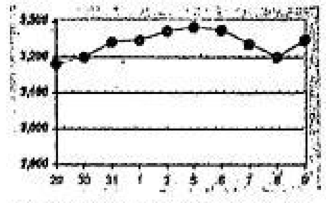
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 48.305 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 9, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

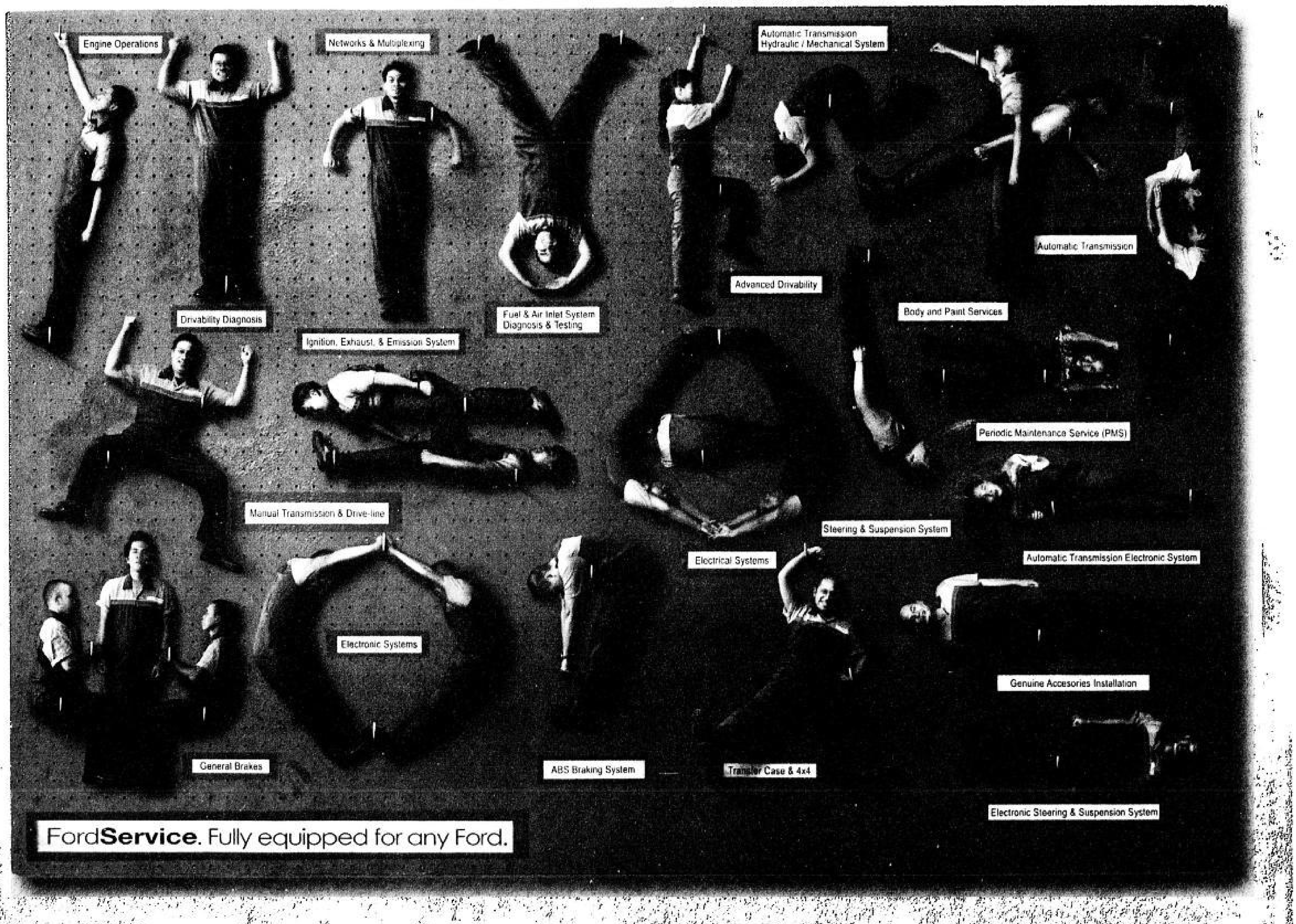
Shares up on bargain hunting

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.56-PERCENT higher yesterday on bargain hunting after a three-day decline, dealers said.

They said investors were also positioning ahead of the release of likely favorable corporate results in the coming weeks.

The composite index was up 49.73 points at 3,245.81 after trading between 3,193.09 and 3,257.71. The broader all-share index rose 21.51 points to 2,050.98. Gainers led losers 79 to 19 with 64 stocks unchanged. Turnover was 4.8 billion shares worth P6.1 billion.

"Investors have resumed buying in blue chips that have become cheaper again," Ron Rodrigo, an analyst at Unicapital Securities Inc., said. **AFP**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Automatic Transmission Hydraulic / Mechanical System
Automatic Transmission
Advanced Drivability
Drivability Diagnosis
Fuel & Air Inlet System Diagnosis & Testing
Body and Paint Services
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Periodic Maintenance Service (PMS)
Manual Transmission & Drive-line
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Ford Solutions

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•Ford Libis, Trunk Line 637-2044, Fax No: 637-6008 • Ford Global City, Trunkline 860-8888, Fax No. 818-5000 • Ford Manila, Tel No: 562-5555 Fax No: 562-8985 • Ford Quezon Avenue, Tel. Nos. 731-2617 / 742-3435 / 742-3436 Fax 742-3451 • Ford Shaw Blvd., Trunk Line 717-0888, Telefax 717-1390
•Ford Pampanga, Trunk Line (045) 961-2888, Fax Nos. (045) 963 5205 / 961 2277 • Ford Cabanatuan, Tel No. (044) 464-0111, Fax No. (044) 600-4200 • Ford Dagupan, Tel No. (075) 522-2222, Telefax (075) 515-5520 • Ford San Pablo, Tel No. (049) 562-9186, Telefax (049) 562-8324 • Ford Cavite, Tel. No. (046) 472-2040, Fax (046) 472-2048
•Ford Cebu, Trunk Line (032) 231-9180, Fax No. (032) 231-9023 • Ford Bacolod, Tel No. (034) 432-2151, Telefax (034) 434-2877 • Ford Iloilo, Tel. No. (033) 321-3352, Telefax No: (033) 321-3351 • Ford Cagayan de Oro, Tel. No. (088) 855-8811, Telefax (088) 855-8877 • Ford Davao, Tel. No. (082) 234-1111, Fax No. (082) 234-2222

SMIC borrows $300M in bonds

By Daxim L. Lucas

SM INVESTMENTS CORP., THE holding firm of mall tycoon Henry Sy Sr., yesterday sealed a deal to borrow $300 million—50 percent more than initially planned—through the issuance of convertible bonds.

SMIC said in a statement that it had received orders for the bonds as much as ten times more than what was offered "allowing SM to command the best terms to date for the issue."

The strong demand made the firm decide to expand the borrowing by $100 million through the exercise of a so-called "greenshoe option," on top of the original $200 million.

The bond has a term of five years.

The bonds fetched a yield of 3.5 percent a year, based on zero coupon and a conversion premium of 22 percent, the firm said. This compares favorably with the current five-year US Treasury rates of almost 5 percent a year and five-year Philippine Treasury bill rates of over 5 percent a year.

"The landmark deal is the largest convertible bond to be issued by a Philippine company and the first in over ten years," the company statement said.

SMIC will use the proceeds of the offer to refinance a portion of its maturing obligations and for "general corporate purposes."

"We are very pleased with the outcome of the exercise which gave SM access to very cheap financing at a time when confidence in the Philippine economy runs high in the international financial markets," SMIC president Harley Sy said in the statement.

Citigroup and Macquarie Securities (Asia) Limited acted as joint lead managers for the bond issue.

The deal was capped by an investor road show conducted by SMIC in Hong Kong, which was attended by the SMIC chief, chief financial officer Jose Sio and vice president for investor relations Corazon Guidote.

News of the fund raising exercise was well received on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), where SMIC's shares edged up to P392.50 apiece from the previous day's close of P387.50 per share. Some P133.9 million worth of shares changed hands during yesterday's trading session.

News of the bond issue came on the heels of the company's announcement that it would raise the capitalization of its two supermarket subsidiaries as part of their expansion programs.

SMIC earlier said it would pump in P300 million into Supervalue, raising its capital from P200 million to P500 million. The company will also inject P150 million into Super Shopping Market, to raise its capitalization from P150 million to P300 million.

BPI got $2.8B in OFW remittances in '06

By Doris C. Dumlao

REMITTANCES SENT THROUGH THE BANK of the Philippine Islands hit $2.8 billion last year, up 30 percent from the previous year, officials said yesterday.

In an interview at the launch of BPI's Search for 10 Outstanding Expat Pinoy Children, BPI vice president Raul Dimayuga, who also heads the OFW-focused banking unit BPI Direct, said BPI was targeting a further 15-percent growth in remittances this year.

Based on the estimated inflows for 2006, BPI, which was the country's single biggest banking channel for OFW remittances in 2005, cornered close to 25 percent of remittances sent through the banking system last year.

Total OFW remittances last year ranged between $13 billion and $14 billion, of which $12 to $13 billion was coursed through banks, according to estimates of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

About 30-33 perent of BPI's share of OFW inflows last year came from sea-based workers, 20-25 percent from the United States and 5-10 percent from the Middle East.

The rest came from Europe and Asia.

BPI senior vice president Teresita Tan said the bank was lining up programs to encourage more overseas Filipinos to invest in the country, whether in savings accounts, mutual funds or real estate.

"We at BPI consider one of our principal thrusts the commitment to serve our fellow countrymen outside of the Philippines. We recognize the significance of their contribution through their investments and remittances," Tan said.

For instance, Tan said BPI has a web-based facility allowing overseas Filipinos to directly pay the tuition fees of their children.

In partnership with Ayala Land Inc.'s subsidiary Avida, Tan said the bank was likewise offering a flexible equity-building program for OFWs who would wish to purchase property but do not have enough funds to make a down payment.

Tan said BPI's housing loan portfolio for OFWs now amounted to P1 billion.

She said the bank would continue to provide new loans for OFWs, not only for housing but also for starting a business.

Meanwhile, Tan said the search for Outstanding Expat Pinoy Children represented "our commitment to promoting the value of education, culture of education and nationalistic pride within our Expat Pinoy children, helping them to realize the magnitude of their parents' contribution to the country, but more importantly, to their future."

At stake is a cash prize of P50,000 for each of the 10 winners.

The tilt is open to children of OFWs aged 15 to 21. They must: have parents or relatives who are BPI depositors, belong to the top 10 percent of their class, without any failing mark; enrolled in or a graduate of a four-year course.

The criteria for judging include: academic excellence (70 percent); non-academic, including sports (5 percent), artistic talent (5 percent), performing arts (5 percent), community/civil works (5 percent) and essay-writing (10 percent).

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and address of Company Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
COLGATE-PALMOLIVE PHILIPPINES, INC. 1049 J.P. Rizal Ave., Makati City	Lucie Claire Vincent Ortiz	President and General Manager
GFG GROUP LIMITED 7/F Business Center, Oakwood Premier Ayala Center, Makati City	Michael Harold	Business Integrator
EVA AIRWAYS CORPORATION 23/F, LKG Tower, 6801 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Szu-Chi Chiao a.k.a. Jeff Chiao	General Manager
JARDINE LLOYD THOMPSON INSURANCE BROKERS INC. 25/F Philamlife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Christopher Robert Murchison	Director, President and Chief Executive Officer
KITCHEN SUPERCENTER, INC. Pioneer Centre Cmpd., 8006 Pioneer St. cor. United St., Pasig City	Yonghong Yang	Maintenance Team Leader
NIPPON KAIJI KYOKAI Unit 902, Pearl of the Orient Tower, 1240 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Shoichi Sato	Consultant
JADI INTERNATIONAL MARKETING CORP. 10/F, Telecom Plaza Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Hai Su	General Manager
SYSTEM FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INC. Unit 701, 7/F West Tektite Tower, PSE Ctr., Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Tohru Ozaki	Technical Adviser
TIERA GENERAL CORPORATION S-11 Marilena Garden, #24 Mariposa St., Bagong Lipunan, Crame, Quezon City	Chul Yong Jung	Field Engineer
FIL. KOR GOLF & BEACH CLUB CORP. U-308, # 8459 Kalayaan Ave., cor. Don Pedro St., Poblacion, Makati City	Jin Ok Oh	Sales Manager
SINGAPORE TELECOM INTERNATIONAL PTE. LTD. 5/F, Globe Telecom Plaza I, Pioneer cor. Madison Sts., Mandaluyong City	Han Kheng Lee	Managing Director
MACRO ASIA-EUREST CATERING SERVICES, INC. Asia Site, Kalayaan Rd., cor. West Service Road, Merville Exit, NAIA, Pasay City	Willi Riesen	Production Manager
MHI TECHNICAL SERVICES CORP. 25/F BPI Buendia Center, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Kengo Tajiri	Technical Supervisor
IEAFA TECH, INC. 34/F, PBCom Tower, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Kieran Padhra	Compliance and Business Development Manager
AIRTAC ENTERPRISES PHILIPPINES CO. LTD. CORP. Unit 18M-O Rainbowland Commercial Center, Sucat, Parañaque City	Ekkaphop Sawaengkarn	Sales Representative

If you have any information / objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI – February 10, 2007)

Meralco steps up anti-pilferage drive

By Abigail L. Ho

THE MANILA ELECTRIC CO. HAS intensified its anti-pilferage campaign, and has succeeded in getting three people convicted of electricity theft.

In a statement yesterday, the distribution utility said Branch 111 of the Pasay Regional Trial Court convicted Christopher Dela Cruz, Alberto De Asis, and Allan Javier for violating the Anti-Electricity Pilferage Law of 1994.

Meralco personnel and elements of the Regional Special Action Unit of Camp Bagong Diwa's Special Action Force caught the three men in the act of tapping into a Meralco service wire in Pasay City.

"Such operations are part of Meralco's intensified efforts to eliminate pilferage of electricity and consequently lower its system losses," Meralco vice president Elpi Cuna said, "This initiative is also part of Meralco's campaign to ensure the safety of residents affected by the dangers of illegal connections."

"Meralco stresses that pilferage is not only morally wrong, but that it also puts customers at risk because of substandard connections," he added.

Since 2005, Meralco and law enforcement personnel have apprehended 145 electricity theft suspects and filed 87 criminal cases of electricity pilferage.

During the third quarter of last year, Meralco reported a system loss of 9.84 percent, almost 1 percentage point higher than in the same period in 2005.

While the distribution utility did not attribute the higher system loss rate mainly to pilferage, it said electricity theft was a huge headache for the company and still a contributor to higher system losses.

To discourage pilferage, Meralco president and chief executive Jesus Francisco had earlier said that the power distributor had put in place several preventive measures.

"We've installed elevated meters in depressed areas, which are intended to make pilferage more difficult in areas that we cannot watch on a 24-hour basis," he said.

He said the company had likewise inked a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Interior and Local Government to not only reduce the incidence of pilferage, but also promote safety and prevent fires.

Asean set to amend MOU on air freight

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST Asian Nations is set to amend a memorandum of agreement on air freight services in the region, said a source privy to the discussions.

The first MOU was signed in September 19, 2002 as a step toward liberalizing air cargo services in the region.

It allows the designated airlines of each Asean member country to carry up to 100 tons of cargo a week, with no limitation on frequency and aircraft type.

A "protocol to amend" the original MOU said designated airlines would be allowed to carry up to 250 tons of cargo a week in each direction, the source said.

The draft amendment, signed during the 12th Asean Transport Ministers meeting held last February 8 in Bangkok, Thailand, also said there would be no limit to the flight frequency and type of aircraft to be used between designated points.

The draft amendment would then be presented to the respective governments for ratification.

Anneli R. Lontoc, undersecretary of the Department of Transportation and Communication, was head of the delegation and reportedly signed the deal for the Philippines.

The source also said the Philippines had urged the opening up of more airports with significant cargo volume to encourage more and better connections for cargo flights.

He added that the protocol was expected to encourage Asean airlines to operate all-cargo services, a move expected to help increase the movement of goods.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 9, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	8	8.2	7.8	8.2	103,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	54.5	56	54.5	56	697,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70	71	69.5	71	2,290,100
China Banking Corp.	760	770	760	770	840
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	35	40	35	39	5,500
Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	2,530,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	96.5	98	96.5	97.5	300,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	61	62	61	62	8,034,700
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	51	53	51	53	4,000
Philippine National Bank	49.5	50.5	49.5	50	60,500
Phil. Savings Bank	55	55	55	55	7,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	42.5	42.5	42.5	42.5	355,400
Security Bank Corp.	77.5	78	77.5	77.5	717,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	62	62.5	62	62	32,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	210,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	5.1	5.2	5	5.2	469,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	32	32	32	32	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1650	1655	1650	1655	1,080
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.86	1.86	271,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	490	490	487.5	487.5	1,100
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2065	2100	2065	2080	2,540
Ivantage Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.66	1,055,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.6	32,720,000
First Gen Corp.	56.5	56.5	55.5	56	2,881,700
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	76	77.5	76	77.5	1,102,200
Manila Electric Co. A	72	75	72	74.5	802,100
Manila Electric Co. B	72.5	76	72.5	75.5	1,572,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	10	10	9.9	9.9	5,152,000
Petron Corp.	4.65	4.7	4.6	4.7	4,285,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	560,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.26	1,705,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.65	3.8	3.65	3.8	4,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.25	24.5	24.25	24.5	305,600
Jollibee Foods Corp.	44	45	44	45	1,240,600
RFM Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.38	586,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	1,111,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	450,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	65.5	64.5	65.5	122,300
San Miguel Corp. B	79.5	79.5	79	79.5	185,600
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.04	2.1	2.02	2.04	2,519,000
Universal Robina Corp.	18.5	18.5	16.75	16.75	29,301,200
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.52	1.56	1.5	1.5	38,398,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	4.3	4.45	4.3	4.45	1,813,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	3.6	3.75	3.5	3.6	104,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8	8	8	8	5,413,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	1,000
Republic Cement Corp.	5.8	6.1	5.8	6	928,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies, Inc.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	2,569,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Picop Resources Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	15,420,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	56,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	67,000,000
Ayala Corp.	650	655	635	635	149,890
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.7	0.72	0.7	0.72	1,550,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	7.9	8	7.8	8	13,993,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	9.6	10	9.2	9.9	7,093,000
AJO.Net Holdings Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.0675	42,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.15	207,000
APC Group Inc.	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.4	8,450,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	468,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	674,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.66	1.66	1.64	1.64	100,000
PAL Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.55	3.6	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	20,700
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.4	3.65	3.4	3.65	34,579,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.3	953,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	5	5.3	5	5.2	3,970,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	230,000
House of Investments Inc.	3.3	3.35	3.1	3.1	181,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	11.75	12	11	11.25	1,871,100
Medco Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	700,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.6	6.1	6.2	3,533,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	2.16	2.3	2.16	2.2	8,896,000
Pacifica	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	44,700,000
Prime Orion Phils., Inc.	0.215	0.225	0.21	0.21	7,900,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	52,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.165	0.17	0.165	0.165	6,090,000
SM Investments Corp.	395	400	390	392.5	337,750
South China Resources Inc.	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.12	1,651,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.7	1.74	1.7	1.74	170,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	250,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	16	16.75	16	16.5	68,989,900
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	590,000
Belle Corp.	1.26	1.3	1.26	1.28	15,529,000
A. Brown Co. Inc.	1.38	1.44	1.38	1.42	4,853,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.47	2,840,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.7	3.65	3.7	133,000
C&P Homes Inc.	2.1	2.26	2.08	2.26	5,117,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	750,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	170,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.74	0.76	0.74	0.74	24,150,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.66	1.66	1.62	1.62	659,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0625	0.0675	0.0625	0.0675	12,000,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	1.78	1.86	1.78	1.82	169,496,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.24	2,870,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.25	1,010,000
Interport Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	63,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	29,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	7,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.51	0.54	0.51	0.52	6,030,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.85	0.88	0.85	0.85	6,590,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	4,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	800,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.65	2.7	2.6	2.7	59,003,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	5	5	4.9	4.9	225,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.1	2.28	2.1	2.24	411,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	18	18.25	17.5	17.75	2,363,600
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.7	0.73	0.7	0.72	76,910,000
SM Development Corp.	3.7	3.8	3.65	3.65	1,645,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12	12	11.75	12	10,174,600
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.63	0.63	1,020,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	3,700,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23	24.25	23	24.25	378,500
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	58,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	2.06	2.12	2.04	2.06	29,568,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1365	1365	1360	1360	56,810
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.9	7	6.7	6.9	7,064,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2475	2560	2475	2550	204,550
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.33	0.34	7,280,000
Ionics Inc.	2.65	2.7	2.65	2.7	317,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	5,900,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	326,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.3	2.34	2.28	2.32	1,702,000
Philweb Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	232,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.1	4.1	4	4	275,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	473,200
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	5,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.18	2.22	2.18	2.2	1,048,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.36	0.39	0.36	0.38	1,010,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.74	0.76	1,250,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	77,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.14	2.16	2.14	2.14	960,000
Paxys Inc.	25	27	24.75	27	370,300
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.5	29,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	298,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	663,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	107,300,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.3	9.4	9.3	9.3	180,000
Benguet Corp. A	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	36,600
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	5,000
Geograce Res. Phil., Inc.	1.08	1.1	1.02	1.04	148,014,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	19,530,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	2,050,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.026	0.025	0.025	78,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.029	0.028	0.029	200,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	2,029,300,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.95	4.05	3.95	3.95	6,552,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.75	52,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.8	0.81	0.77	0.77	1,670,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.52	1.54	1.48	1.5	6,684,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	2,290,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	155,200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	30,100,000
The Philodrill Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	174,300,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	65,600

CURRENCIES

February 9, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.766812	1.000000	48.4220
Japan	Yen	0.006335	0.008262	0.4001
United Kingdom	Pound	1.501802	1.958500	94.8345
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098128	0.127969	6.1965
Switzerland	Franc	0.615469	0.802633	38.8651
Canada	Dollar	0.648796	0.846095	40.9696
Singapore	Dollar	0.500531	0.652742	31.6071
Australia	Dollar	0.598979	0.781128	37.8238
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.034147	2.652731	128.4505
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.204620	0.266845	12.9212
Brunei	Dollar	0.498902	0.650618	31.5042
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000110	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.022422	0.029240	1.4159
UAE	Dirham	0.208798	0.272294	13.1850
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.304100	63.1471
Korea	Won	0.000820	0.001070	0.0518
China	Yuan**	0.098964	0.129059	6.2493
Argentina	Peso	0.247160	0.322321	15.6074
Brazil	Real	0.365497	0.476644	23.0801
Denmark	Kroner	0.134204	0.175015	8.4746
India	Rupee	0.017424	0.022722	1.1002
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219528	0.286287	13.8626
Mexico	New Peso	0.070028	0.091324	4.4221
New Zealand	Dollar	0.525862	0.685777	33.2067
South Africa	Rand	0.106927	0.139443	6.7521
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023234	0.030300	1.4672

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time—Feb. 8, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Feb. 8, 2007

BSP seen preventing sharp peso climb against dollar

To temper adverse effect on exporters

By Michelle V. Remo

BECAUSE A STRENGTHENING PESO hurts the country's exports, financial advisory firm CLSA sees the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas intervening in the market should the local currency appreciate sharply.

CLSA noted the expectations that the peso could rise further by 10 percent this year barring any government intervention on the back of growing remittances from overseas Filipino workers and improving macroeconomic conditions.

"But that is probably not going to be allowed to happen because of government concerns of what it would do to the export sector in lower margin areas like electronics and garments," CLSA said in a paper on the Philippines and other economies titled "Greed and Fear."

"A seemingly inevitable back up in peso interest rates should prove limited, in part because the government does not want to see the peso appreciate unduly from present levels," CLSA said.

Since last year, when the peso strengthened to the 49-to-a-dollar level, exporters have been urging the government to take action to prevent dragging down their competitiveness in the global market. The peso continues to strengthen, now hovering in the 48-to-$1 level.

The BSP, however, said its policy was to allow market forces to determine the exchange rate and intervene only when there's excessive volatility.

In December, exports dropped by 3.8 percent to $3.68 billion from a year ago, ending the 10 consecutive months of double-digit growth. Some analysts said the appreciation of the peso was partly responsible for this.

An appreciating peso makes Philippine-made products more expensive for foreigners and therefore less competitive.

While the appreciation of the peso was hurting exporters, CLSA said the currency movement was also an indication of improvements on the macroeconomic front. It said a stronger peso was a consequence of efforts to improve the government's fiscal standing.

"The single most important economic achievement of the Arroyo government, and the reason why greed and fear went heavily overweight, was the decision to expand VAT revenue collection in November 2005 at a time when oil prices were high," CLSA said.

CLSA noted that the fiscal developments did not only positively affect the peso, but also interest rates. It noted that interest rates on the 91-day treasury bills had dropped to the 3-percent level and on the 10-year bonds to 6.8 percent, both of which were record lows.

Strong dollar inflows from OFWs were also cited as a major reason for the appreciation of the peso to six-year highs, CLSA said, and would continue to be a major contributor to economic growth.

"But if sounder macroeconomic management has been the catalyst for a virtuous cycle, it is also important to note that President Arroyo's job has been made much easier because of the massive following wind generated by overseas remittances, which continue to run at an extraordinary 11 percent of GDP (gross domestic product)," it added.

Exports jumped 14% . . .

From page B1

mained the country's top export at $2.26 billion in December. This was 12.1-percent lower than the $2.57 billion a year ago.

Articles of apparel and clothing accessories were the second-biggest exports, accounting for $195.88 million of the total earnings for the month. This was 7.6-percent lower than the $212.03 a year ago.

Cathodes and sections of cathodes of refined copper ranked third with $109.13 million. This was a growth of 532.1 percent from $17.26 million in December 2005.

Other top exports for December were ignition wiring set and other wiring sets used in vehicles, aircraft and ships, $75.01 million; woodcraft and furniture, $61.88 million; coconut oil, $50.62 million; bananas, $42.48 million; metal components, $38.18 million, and petroleum products, $28 million.

Analysts said the drop in exports in December signaled a likely slowdown in exports growth in 2007. The deceleration in the economy of the United States, a major export market for the Philippines, is seen to put a drag on growth.

"We will still see exports growing this year. But unlike in 2006, we will be lucky to get a 10-percent growth this year," Abola said. Exports growth is estimated to settle between 8 and 10 percent this year, he added.

The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), however, earlier said the projected slowdown in the US economy would not significantly hurt Philippine exports because of the expected growth in demand in other markets.

Dennis Arroyo, Neda director for policy and planning, had noted a forecast by the California-based Semiconductor Industry Association that global demand for electronics would post double-digit growth this year. This was based on the expected higher demand for consumer electronics, partly because of the new gadgets to be launched this year.

The government has set its exports growth target for this year at 11 percent.

The NSO said the United States was still the top export market for December, accounting for $671.27 million of the Philippines' total export earnings for the month.

Other top markets were Japan, $530.59 million; China, $456.04 million; the Netherlands, $314.02 million; Hong Kong, $294 million; Singapore, $248.15 million; Malaysia, $217.67 million; Taiwan, $154.28 million; Germany, $144.93 million; and South Korea, $94.3 million.

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		361,500	30,125	20,083	15,404	10,962	8,741	7,472	6,790
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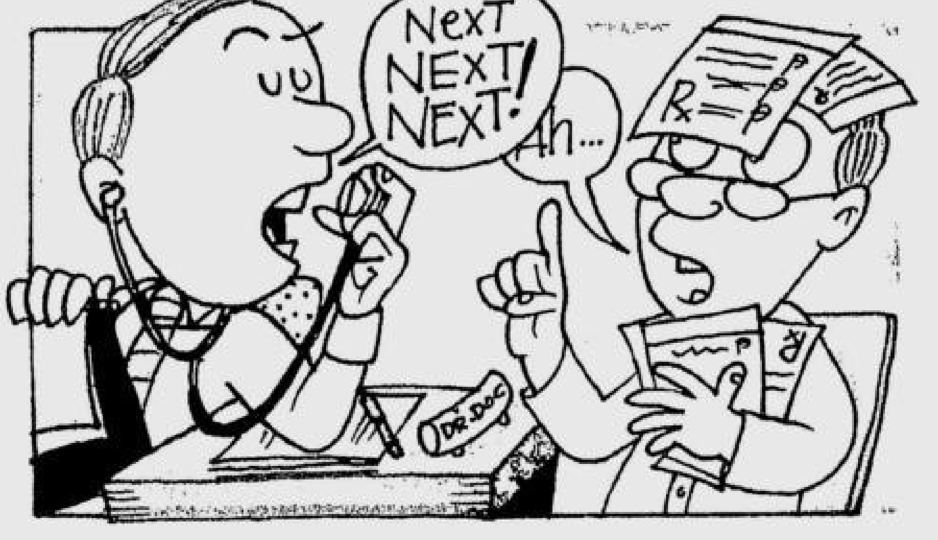
Why Filipinos have poor BP control

By Tessa R. Salazar



IN SPITE OF THE AVAILABILITY OF groups of medications that have been introduced in the market (diuretics, peripheral inhibitors, central Alfa II agonists, Alpha I receptor blockers, Beta receptor blockers, direct vasodilators, calcium antagonists, ACE inhibitors, Angiotensin II blockers and aldosterone blockers), only seven percent of all the world's hypertensive patients have well-controlled blood pressure.

Dr. Adolfo B. Bellosillo, president of the Foundation for Lay Education on Heart Diseases Inc., said during the seventh national annual convention on Preventive Cardiology that achieving normal blood pressure with antihypertensive medications remains an elusive goal for many hypertensives.

Achieving normal BP levels is crucial in the long-term, as this would prevent serious complications such as stroke, acute heart failure and kidney failure.

Contributing factors

Bellosillo cited as some contributing factors doctors' failure to recognize the hemodynamics (the dynamics of blood circulation that cause elevated blood pressure) involved in the elevation of blood pressure and patients' nonadherence to therapy.

Bellosillo said blood pressure goes up for a number of reasons, and there are two factors that could lead to the failure to recognize the hemodynamics involved: the peripheral resistance and the cardiac output (the output of the heart every time it beats). The body maintains normal blood pressure by adjusting cardiac output and peripheral resistance.

"If one or both is increased, this can increase your blood pressure, but the question is: by the bedside or at the clinic, how can we detect if the problem is peripheral resistance or the increase in cardiac output or both?" he asked.

In the past, doctors would resort to right heart catheterization to pinpoint the root of the problem. (Catheterization involves inserting a catheter—a long, thin flexible tube—into the right side of the heart with the tip of the catheter positioned at the main pulmonary artery to measure cardiac output and peripheral resistance). Bellosillo said this process was expensive, would require special setups and carried certain risks.

7 reasons

Addressing physicians during the Jan. 27 convention with the theme "Issues and Concerns in Preventive Cardiology in the Elderly," Bellosillo enumerated the following reasons for patients' nonadherence to therapy:

- **The cost of medication.** This is one of the main culprits. Bellosillo said patients' blood pressure is not controlled since they are not taking medicines, mainly because of their prohibitive costs.
- **No patient education.** Bellosillo said, "We physicians failed to educate our hypertensive patients because the most commonly heard word in the physician's office is 'Next! Next! Next!'

"We do not take the time to sit with our patients and educate them about hypertension, the importance of risk factors and what these medications are."

- **Unclear instructions.** Oftentimes, when doctors prescribe medication, either their penmanship is not legible enough or their instructions are not specific.

Bellosillo cited as a commonly occurring example when medicines were prescribed "once a day."

"What time of the day? There are 24 hours a day and we know very well that when hypertension is being attacked, it must be attacked at the proper time. The timing of intake of medicine is very important because you know that when you're treating hypertension, you are only treating your patient to control the elevation of blood pressure to avoid serious complications such as stroke, heart failure and heart attack."

- **Lack of involvement of patient in the treatment plan.** Most of this, Bellosillo said, is the fault of the physician as "we do not educate (the patients)."
- **Lack of patient's education on the side effects.** Bellosillo pointed out that many of these medicines have side effects and that physicians failed to educate the patients of these. Not knowing the side effects could cause panic among patients.
- **Memory deficit.** This concerns more elderly patients.
- **Inconvenient dosing.** Studies have shown that the more pills a patient has to take, the bigger chance that he or she will not be compliant.

Loving milk around the world

DISCOVER

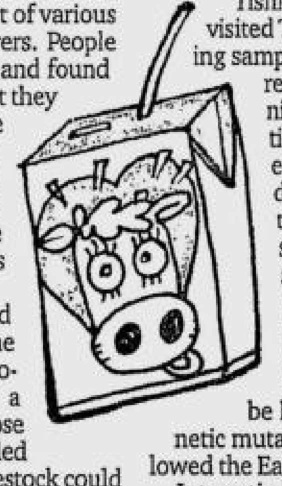
Massie Santos Ballon

THIS MAY NOT BE THE TYPICAL SUBJECT for the weekend before Valentine's Day, but it seemed like a good time to focus on an essential ingredient in that all-important Valentine's box of chocolates: milk.

Cow's milk is often advertised as an important part of one's diet. It helps build strong bones due to its calcium content, has lots of essential vitamins and minerals, has been associated with weight loss, and, when not taken by itself, can make a lot of dishes even tastier. And yet despite the benefits, a good portion of the population can't actually digest it, which is partly why there are alternative options such as soy milk and rice milk or *am*. (Sadly, one doesn't see a lot of sweet offerings in heart-shaped boxes for the lactose-intolerant.)

Ability to digest lactose

Why is the ability to digest lactose so important? Once upon a time, many thousands of years ago, humans lived as part of various nomadic bands of hunter-gatherers. People ate the meat of cows and sheep, and found uses for their hides and bones, but they didn't milk these animals. As the nomads began to stop wandering and erect settlements, however, they also began domesticating various animals, including the ancestors of today's cows, goats and sheep.



Unsurprisingly then, around this time the gene for the enzyme lactase—which is what helps people digest milk—underwent a slight modification so that those former nomads who had settled down to raise milk-producing livestock could actually ingest their dairy products. Prior to this, humans were mostly lactose-intolerant, only able to tolerate milk when they were still babies being breastfed.

Mutation on lactase gene

This summarized version of history is the result of work that began in the 1960s, when anthropologists started correlating the incidence of lactose-tolerant people with their society's history of raising dairy livestock. Within the first decade, the mutation on the lactase gene which allowed (primarily northern) Europeans to digest cow's milk was discovered. However, researchers were puzzled by the fact that other European ethnic groups—to say nothing of the Asians and Africans—that were also raising dairy livestock and were lactose-tolerant didn't have this same mutation.

The Dec. 15, 2006 issue of the journal Nature Genetics now provides a partial explanation for this. Biologist Sarah Tishkoff from the University of Maryland and her team of researchers from all over the world worked with several tribes in East Africa to find the biological basis for their ability to digest milk and found more than they bargained for.

Simple test

Tishkoff and members of her team visited Tanzania, Kenya and Sudan, taking samples from nearly 500 people who represented over 40 different ethnic groups. Given the field conditions, they chose a simple test: each individual was asked to drink some liquefied lactose and their blood glucose levels over a short period of time was measured in order to determine their ability to digest it. Back in the lab, Tishkoff et al. then sequenced the samples of those individuals who were found to be lactose-tolerant and found 3 genetic mutations of the lactase gene that allowed the East Africans to digest cow's milk.

Interestingly, these mutations or alleles identified by Tishkoff et al. are not found in Europeans. As the researchers point out in their paper, this proof of convergent evolution is the real significance of their research: that these various mutations to the lactase gene evolved independently of each other at different times around the world in response to a people's need to digest the food they raised. The ability to ingest lactose not only gave the newly settled nomads a new food, it may have even helped them accept and adjust to their new lifestyles as they learned to stay put in one place, to farm and to raise livestock. It's unromantic, but there was love involved when people learned to drink milk.

* * *

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

A public school student excels

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

TWO YEARS AGO, THE STUDENT who topped my College Algebra class was not from a private exclusive school. He did not hail from a Filipino-Chinese school, nor from a science high school. Von Karlo O. Sinence came from Parang High School in Marikina City.

Von got perfect in a number of my exams, and he was exempted from the finals. The class was in awe of his ability. The secrets of Von's success? A loving family, supportive teachers, self-reliance and perseverance.

Loving family

At the age of 3, Von would already call his mother at the office, and converse with his father's colleagues. A year later, his mother tried to enroll him in nursery school, but since he did not meet the age requirement, he only attended the class as an observer.

When Von was 5 years old, the family business suffered. The family moved to Baloi in Lanao del Norte to live with his dad's friends. A kind neighbor, who happened to be a Department of Interior and Local Government official, helped Von go to Baloi Central Elementary School. His mother set up a stall at the school canteen, and this became the family's main source of income.

Von recalls, "First grade was difficult. My parents woke up early to cook foods for the canteen, and boil two pouches of pancit canton for my daily breakfast. Since I did not have extra uniforms, sometimes, I would go to school in 'casual' clothes, and pay the one-peso fine. Even if the school was the one nearest our house, I still had to walk a kilometer to reach it, with my Kuya Bobot at my side. Often, I could not afford to buy supplies. There was also no assurance of a *baon* every day. Moreover, since I was new in town, I did not have friends. To top it off, all my classmates were Muslim and only spoke Maranao, which I did not understand."

But Von did not give up. His excellent academic performance made him famous in school. He represented the school in various competitions. He learned to get along with his classmates. Von graduated valedictorian from Baloi Central in March 2001. He also topped the entrance tests of Mindanao State University Science Training Center and the Baloi Pilot High School.

Supportive teachers

But Von's destiny lay elsewhere. During this time, his elder sisters were residing in Marikina City. Promising to support Von's schooling, his sisters urged his parents to send their brother to the city. Von missed his parents badly, but he vowed to continue doing well in school. But when he first tried to enroll at the nearby Parang High School, the school rejected him because he was a transferee. He stayed home for the first four days of high school, but again, with the help of a neighbor who knew a school administrator, he finally got in.

Von faced a new set of problems. Despite his excellent grade school performance, he was not confident of his abilities, especially in new surroundings. He believed that Manila was different—that demands were harder. During the first week of school, there were not enough chairs in the classroom, so Von sat on the floor. Everyone seemed to speak good English, so Von did not participate much at first. Being in the star section terrified him.

But Von persevered. He ran for a position on the student council, and to his surprise, he won. He soon became Top One in the batch.

Von remembers, "Another remarkable thing happened in my first year: I became great in math. Back in Baloi, I was not exceptional in this subject, but now, with the encouragement of my teacher Mr. Madrigalejo, I learned to love math. I joined supplementary classes every Saturday and attended training sessions for contestants. I got first place in the division level of the Metrobank-Dep-Ed-Math Teachers Association National Math Challenge. My passion did not wane. I owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Madrigalejo—and my other math teachers, Mrs. Daelo, Mrs. Asuncion and Mrs. Olvida."

After four fruitful years, Von graduated valedictorian, and received the President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Award of Excellence in Business and Technology.

Perseverance

With the help of Pathways to Higher Education, Von entered Ateneo de Manila University in 2005 as a full scholar, majoring in Communications Technology. Von muses, "Ateneo is demanding, but I will persevere. What drives me to put my best foot forward is having a purpose in life. I became a consistent honor student not so much for myself, but rather for my family. I love to see the smiles on the faces of my family, especially my mother. I want to fulfill their expectations—that I become the future breadwinner of the family. Moreover, I want to use my capabilities to help other people. Right now, I am giving back to Pathways by becoming a mentor to public high school students, and I enjoy doing so."

Von is only one of many public school students who excel in school. This morning, at the Ateneo de Manila Grade School Auditorium, together with marriage and family counselor Maribel Sison-Dionisio and Ateneo parent volunteers Nerisa Fernandez and Armand Favis, I will present the best practices of families of public school achievers in Marikina and Bulacan. For copies of our parent guide titled Magaling ang Pinoy! How and Why Public School Students Achieve, please contact the Ateneo Office of Research and Publications at 426-6001 loc. 5180 to 5183, or e-mail orp@admu.edu.ph.

* * *

Queena N. Lee-Chua is a professor of mathematics and psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. Contact her at blessbook@yahoo.com.

On hypertension, Guinness World Records, Senator Angara

By Rafael R. Castillo, M.D.

MEDICAL FILES

OUR HEART EXPERTS ARE REALLY taking hypertension seriously. The increasing rate of complications and premature deaths and shortened survival of inadequately treated hypertensive patients, as shown by researches, are enough cause for alarm.

What is quite lamentable is that it's so easy to find out if one is hypertensive or not—all it takes is a few minutes—and yet, a lot of people are walking around with a severely elevated blood pressure without them knowing it. Relying on any of the so-called "high-blood" symptoms such as headache, dizziness and nape pain, is one of the most serious mistakes hypertensive patients realize too late because the majority of patients with high blood pressure are perfectly symptom-free and the first manifestation of hypertension is when they develop a stroke or a heart attack.

"If only I knew earlier, I would have had my BP checked before my right part of my body got paralyzed," says Rolando Sebastian from Pampanga. He survived a stroke two years ago and has remained disabled since then. The slurring of his speech is still there and he cannot control the drooping of his saliva from his mouth.

Local heart experts estimate that there are at least eight million hypertensives in the country and half of them, or four million, are not even aware that they are hypertensive. They are all candidates to develop stroke, heart attack, heart failure, kidney failure and other serious complications of untreated hypertension. All those who are interested to have their blood pressure checked and learn some information on prevention and control of high blood pressure can coordinate with their barangay leaders or the respective offices of their local vice mayor. You may also call the PHA Hotline at 929-1173."

Nationwide BP screening

It is for this reason that the Philippine Heart Association, in collaboration with the Vice Mayor's League of the Philippines, and with the assistance of Therapharma Inc., is conducting a massive nationwide BP screening on Feb. 11 (Sunday) nationwide, from 8 to 12 noon in churches, public markets and barangay halls. All those who are interested to have their blood pressure checked and learn some information on prevention and control of high blood pressure can coordinate with their barangay leaders or the respective offices of their local vice mayor.

This to date is the most extensive BP screening organized in the country, and probably worldwide. If they achieve their target of screening at least 200,000 Filipino adults, that can land them a place in the Guinness World Records since the current record holder had less than 150,000 people screened in one day.

Identifying hypertensives

But of course, this is not a matter of breaking world records. This is a matter of solving the problem of how to find out the four million Filipinos many of whom may already be considered high-risk to develop serious complications including premature death.

The next big problem is how to convince them to religiously take their medicines for life even if they're without symptoms. But we can worry about that later on. Once hypertensive patients are already identified, they can at least be conscious of their reckless diet and other unhealthy lifestyle practices, so they can be more strongly motivated to make the necessary lifestyle changes. That's good enough for a start.

PIM donation

Just concluded also is the 12th joint annual convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension and Philippine Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society. Sen. Ed Angara was the keynote speaker during the opening ceremonies and he was concerned by the lack of researches on cardiovascular problems in our country. He is a staunch believer on research activities as the solid basis for policy-making. He offered to assist the twin societies in their research projects by looking for potential donors who would be willing to subsidize the many research plans in the twin societies' pipeline.

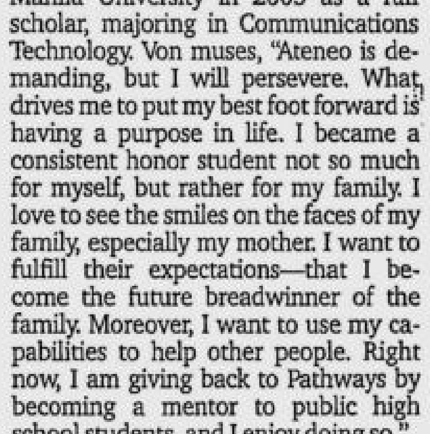
To sweeten the pot, he has generously donated one million pesos. Hopefully, that will start the ball rolling so our local cardiovascular researchers can finally have the break they've been long waiting for. We wish we had more people in the government like Senator Angara who realize the value of research and would help allocate funds for it rather than subsidize waiting sheds and fancy monuments in parks.

S-sn-snn-snoring

Nearly half of adults snore occasionally, while a fourth snore habitually.

Science of snoring

As you sleep, your soft palate, tongue and throat relax


Airflow is forced through sagging tissue ...
... vibrating the soft palate

What can help:

- Lose weight
- Sleep on side, not back
- No sleep-inducing medicines before bed
- Avoid food or alcohol four hours prior to bedtime

SOURCES: MayoClinic.com; webmd.com AP

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF CAPIZ

City of Roxas, Province of Capiz
(036) 6210-036 Local 254
Fax No.: (036) 6210-036 Local 158

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Capiz thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE invites interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Name of Contract : Materials use for the concreting of Panay-Pawa Road Phase-VI, Panay, Capiz
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P2,657,415.00
Source of Fund : Non Office (2006) Road Concreting

1.	Portland Cement	13,638	bags
2.	16mm x 6.0 tie wire	345	pcs
3.	#16 G.I. Tie Wire	50	kgs
4.	Blown Asphalt	2	drum
5.	610 mm x 1.0 m RCPC	12	pcs
6.	910 mm x 1.0 m RCPC	20	pcs
7.	2"x10' PVC S 20	16	pcs

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Submission of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application of Eligibility	February 16, 2007
2. Issuance of Bid documents	February 16, 2007
3. Pre-Bid Conference	February 21, 2007
4. Opening of Bids	February 23, 2007

1. In order to qualify for participation in the public bidding, bidders should conform to all eligibility requirements as prescribed by the Implementing Rules And Regulations of the Republic Act 9184.
2. The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility forms at Provincial General Services Office, Provincial Capitol, Roxas City upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payments of prescribed non-refundable fee of PESOS: One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00)
3. Bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the same address.
4. Bidders shall drop their duly accomplished technical and financial proposals in two separate envelopes in the bid boxes before the deadline of submission of bids, if they have not earlier pre-qualified.
5. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in a form of cash and must be delivered to the PGSO on or before the bid closing date.
6. BAC Committee assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.
7. BAC Committee reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure or not to award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **DANTE B. BERMEJO**
Chairman
BAC Committee

(PDI–February 10, 2007)

INVITATION TO BID AND PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Ayala Alabang Village Association invites all interested parties to join the bidding for the following services:

ALL GROUND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT:

1. Park Maintenance
2. Street sweeping, Creek Clearing, Grass cutting
3. Waste Management
4. Utility: Swimming pool Attendants, Radio Operators, Janitors, Messengerial and Drivers
5. Garbage Collection
6. Internal Security
7. Perimeter Security

SUBMIT CERTIFIED TRUE COPIES OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Company Profile
2. SEC Registration (Corporation) / DTI Registration (Sole Proprietorship)
3. License to Operate / Government Remittances (SSS, Pag-Ibig & Phil Health)
4. Mayor's Permit and Barangay Clearance
5. List of clients / projects with their respective telephone numbers and addresses
6. Latest Audited Financial Statement (2006)
7. Lists of Equipment
8. Other requirements which may be decided by the bids and awards committee and/or AAVA Management

Submission of the above requirements to pre-qualify shall not be later than 5:00 pm, February 16, 2007 (Friday) at the Village Manager's Office, Ayala Alabang Village Association, Muntinlupa City.

For further information, please contact Nerie Pancho or Jay Joya at Tel. No. 807-58-59 or 807-0511 loc. 302 & 303.

More Classified Ads:

• Pasig River Rehabilitation	A2
• DEP-ED • Metro Iloilo Water District	A8
• Development Bank of the Philippines	A15
• Agusan del Sur Electric Cooperative • Social Security System • National Food Authority	A17
• TESDA	A22
• DOLE-NCR	B2

JOB OPPORTUNITY

The **MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY** needs applicants for **CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY INSPECTOR** under the Airport Security Inspectorate Office (ASIO).

QUALIFICATIONS:

- **EDUCATION:** Bachelor's Degree (preferably Bachelor of Science in Criminology);
- **AGE:** Between 22 to 30 years old;
- **HEIGHT:** 5'8" (Male); 5'4" (Female);
- Must be computer literate (proficient in MS Office);
- Must have good oral and written communication skills; Preferably with basic training in Aviation Security Course and a Career Service Professional Eligibility.

SUBMIT:

1. Resume / Personal Data Sheet (PDS);
2. Recent 2x2 picture;
3. Latest Community Tax Certificate;
4. Photocopy of Diploma or Transcript of Records;
5. Photocopy of Certificate of training / seminars attended;
6. Certificate of Eligibility Rating (CSC), if any;
7. NBI Clearance.

Apply personally and bring original copy of item nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7 for authentication to:

LBP SERVICE CORPORATION
Unit C & D, 21/F Petron Megaplaza Building
Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City
Trunkline: (02) 843-2077 locals 213 / 214

Last day for submission of application is on February 14, 2007

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Agencia de Makati
Tel# 889-7956

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372nd & 373rd PCCI
ALL-BREEDS
DOG SHOW
The Block SM City
North Edsa, Q.C.
February 17 & 18, 2007
UNDER INT'L JUDGES
WALTER SHICKER
(Germany)
MARIE MCKENZIE
(Australia)
Deadline of Entries
February 14, 2007
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THIRD OFFICER
– US$ 1,500 per month
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– US$ 2,097 per month

CHIEF ENGINEER
– US$ 4,200 per month
SECOND ENGINEER
– US$ 3,100 per month
THIRD ENGINEER
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– US$ 1,500 per month
REEFER ENGINEER
– US$ 1,500 per month

INTERESTED PARTIES MAY VISIT US WITH VALID RELEVANT DOCUMENTS IN OUR OFFICE BELOW

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No Fees to be collected!

City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** invites PhilGEPS registered suppliers to apply for the following items.

Name of Projects	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline / Opening of Bids	
1. Janitorial Services	P 3,398,164.00	February 15, 2007	February 27, 2007, 10:00 AM	P 1,100.00
2. Security Services	P 9,693,090.00	February 15, 2007	February 27, 2007, 10:00 AM	P 2,400.00

The Bid documents shall be available at the City Mayor's Office, Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division, City Hall, Zamboanga City starting February 07 to 27, 2007 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicative above.

The Pre-Bid conference shall be held at **City Engineer's Office, Conference Hall, City Hall, Zamboanga City.**

The Bidder shall drop and enclose the original of the Technical Proposal in one sealed envelope; whereas, the original of the Financial Proposal shall be enclosed in another sealed envelope. Both envelopes shall then be placed in another envelope. In the bid box located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division at telephone no. (062) 992-7763.

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) DR. MARIO D. ARRIOLA
BAC Chairman

(PDI – February 10, 2007)

OBITUARIES

Death Notice

MA. PAZ
E. REMO
(Mother, Teacher)
of Goa, Camarines Sur
passed away
on February 9, 2007.

Her body lies in state at their residence on L. Pan St., Goa, Camarines Sur.

Interment will be announced later.

> **"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."**
> 2 Corinthians 5:8

We Remember Lovingly and Dearly

ISIDRO "ROY" HOJAS ESCANO

of Cagayan de Oro City

ON HIS 25TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

on February 10, 2007.

Masses will be offered today, February 10, 2007 at the following churches:

GREENHILLS MEMORIAL PARK, BULUA	4:00 PM
SAN VICENTE FERRER, CUGMAN	6:00 AM
SAN ISIDRO LABRADOR, GUSA	6:00 AM
JESUS NAZARENO PARISH, RECTO AVE.	5:30 PM
OUR LADY OF FATIMA, CAMAMAN-AN	6:00 AM
OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL, CARMEN	6:00 AM
ST. AUGUSTINE CATHEDRAL	5:00 PM
SAN ANTONIO DE PADUA, NAZARETH	6:00 AM
STO. NIÑO PARISH, COGON	6:00 AM
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, BULUA	6:00 AM
CARMELITE MONASTERY, CAMAMAN-AN	6:00 AM
CARMELITE MONASTERY, BUKIDNON	6:30 AM

We, his relatives, request the friends and pious reader to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

OBITUARIES

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Sofia Chua Lim

who peacefully joined her Creator
on January 31, 2007 at the age of 91

wish to express our sincerest and most grateful appreciation
to all who sent flowers; offered prayers,
mass cards and messages of sympathy;
visited and kept vigil with us; attended the funeral rites;
and condoled with us in our hour of bereavement.

We will always remember your expression
of sympathy, concern and support.

> **"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you."**
> John 14:1-2

BUSINESS

DTI: Substandard products continue to flood local market

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SUBSTANDARD PRODUCTS CONTINUE to proliferate, even as the Department of Trade and Industry announced that it had confiscated P60 million worth of products that did not undergo the government's quality control tests before distribution in the market.

The amount is 27.8 percent higher than the P54 million worth of such items seized across the nation in 2005.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said the uncertified products were seized from 147 establishments out of the 425 that it monitored nationwide with the help of various industry associations and other government agencies.

The haul includes liquefied petroleum gas cylinders, steel bars, wiring devices, wires and cables, electrical tapes, compact fluorescent lamps, plywood, sanitary wares, flat glass, auto batteries, brake fluid, fire extinguishers, monobloc chairs and Christmas lights.

Those whose products were seized were penalized for violation of the provisions of Consumer Act, the Standards Law, Department Administrative Order 02 Series of 2002 and other related trade laws.

Administrative fines collected totaled P2.27 million.

Favila said the uncertified, substandard products seized from the market were destroyed to ensure that these would not be sold to consumers.

Also, Trade Undersecretary Zenaida C. Maglaya said the Bureau of Product Standards, through its ten-year strategic plan, would continue to develop and harmonize essential standards while it monitors the compliance of manufacturers and importers.

Maglaya said BPS so far has published a total of 5,525 Philippine National Standards (PNS), of which 77 percent, or 4,274, have been aligned to appropriate international standards.

"The alignment of PNS to global benchmarks increases the competitiveness of Philippine products and services, enabling the development of the export business and the entry of much needed foreign earnings," she said.

National gov't debt reached ₱3.9T in Nov.

Officials indicate slight decline of 0.2% from previous month

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S OUTstanding debt hit P3.908 trillion in November last year, declining by a slight 0.2 percent from the previous month's P3.914 trillion on account of a stronger peso.

If divided among the country's estimated population of 88.7 million for 2007, each person will have a share of P44,059 of the government's debt burden.

Contingent liabilities, or debts incurred by state-owned firms that carry a sovereign guarantee, reached P577 billion in November. This was P31.4-billion higher than the P545.6 billion recorded as of end-October.

Contingent liabilities are not included in the computation of the national government's outstanding debt, unless the borrowing state-owned firms default on their obligations.

The decline in the government's debt does not mean that it has already stopped borrowing. It still has to plug its budget deficit, National Treasurer Omar Cruz explained.

The decline in the government's debt, Cruz said, was largely attributed to the appreciation of the peso and debt swaps.

In November, the peso settled at an average of 49.843 against the US dollar, stronger than the 50.003 recorded in October.

An appreciation of the peso makes the government's foreign-denominated debts cheaper in peso terms, thus pulling down the outstanding debt.

As to debt swaps, the government taps the capital market to borrow at lower cost, using the proceeds to pay off yet-to-mature obligations that have higher interest rates. This effectively trims down the outstanding debt, Cruz said.

Of the November debt figure of P3.908 trillion, the bigger share of P2.166 trillion was owed to domestic creditors, while the smaller share of P1.742 trillion was owed to foreign lenders.

Because foreign borrowings expose the borrower to foreign-exchange risks, which could further bloat its debts, the government has adopted the policy of borrowing more from domestic sources of credit rather than foreign.

The government borrows domestically through the issuance of Treasury bills and bonds. Government officials undertake foreign borrowings either through the flotation of sovereign bonds in the international capital market or through official development assistance.

Cruz said that this year, the share of ODAs in the government's total foreign borrowings will be bigger than that of commercial loans. This is to keep the government's cost of borrowings cheaper, as ODAs impose a significantly lower interest rate than the capital market.

The country's biggest source of ODA are the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank.

The government this year intends to borrow $2.466 billion from foreign sources and P260.1 billion from the domestic capital market to help fund its 2007 expenditure programs.

DA checks out proposal to sell, produce, modified rice in RP

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE is reviewing an application for the commercial production of the first genetically modified rice to be distributed in the domestic market.

The Bureau of Plant Industry, an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture, is now investigating and checking the safety of the modified seed technology to humans, animals and the environment before it approves the application of Bayer Crop Science, According to Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap.

Government officials are looking at new seed technologies to address food production problems of the country.

According to the International Rice Research Institute, new rice varieties that can withstand droughts and soils with high salinity, rice seeds that can produce higher yields due to its disease- and pest-resistant genes, promise to curb an impending worldwide rice shortfall by 2010.

"These are some of the new breakthroughs, especially the completion of the rice genome that spells the solution to fragile economies that have rice as their major staple," said IRRI information officer Duncan Macintosh.

"The decline in global rice stocks has reached alarming levels," said IRRI's Dr. Mahabub Hossain. "Water is getting scarce and land has been diverted to alternative uses, narrowing down chances of increasing rice production.

"Adoption of new plant type and hybrid rice for the tropics is crucial."

Yesterday, environment advocate Greepeace Philippines revealed that, since last year, it repeatedly alerted the National Food Authority about the presence in the market of GMO-tainted rice banned for human consumption.

Greenpeace said the NFA has remained silent over the local distribution of "Uncle Sam Texas Long Grain," which the militant group claimed was tainted.

DR. JOEY Castro (center), chair of LIFE Scholarships, enjoys the time he spends with students of Rizal High School.

With Gas for Life, program for kids becomes more than a pipe dream

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CORPORATE CITIZEN

MADEL MERCADO ONCE THOUGHT that she would never fulfill her dream of going to college. Her family just did not have enough money for her education.

Michael Vincent Garcia had felt the same. He had been passed around from one relative to another following his parents' separation. For Garcia, completing high school even seemed to be out of reach.

Fortunately, they won a scholarship provided by Every Nation Leadership Institute (ENLI), and now, they are on their way to completing their studies.

Manila Autogas, the country's first all-Filipino Liquefied Petroleum Gas refilling station and vehicle conversion center, wants other underprivileged students to get the same chance at a better life through its Gas for Life program.

Under the program, 10 centavos of every liter of LPG sold at the stations go to the scholarship fund.

Manila Autogas CEO Jerome Gutierrez said his company joined forces with ENLI because he believed in the cause of promoting education among the youth.

Manila Autogas cited studies, which show that at least one in 10 Filipinos of school age do not go to school because they could not afford the tuition.

Gutierrez said embracing the cause of funding the education of poor yet promising youth gave him one more reason to build his company and sell more LPG.

"It's not all about business," Gutierrez said. "It is also about doing your part for the community and nation-building, and also about educating the next generation."

Customers also get into the act by patronizing Manila Autogas stations.

Institutionalized support

Gutierrez was confident that he would be able to put more scholars through school as sales of LPG have been on the rise because more taxicabs and private vehicles have been converting their engines to run on LPG.

Manila Autogas has seven LPG refilling stations in Metro Manila, with plans to expand to 12 full service stations and 12 kiosk-type outlets this year.

Now that Manila Autogas has institutionalized its support for Life Scholarships, the foundation's board members are confident that they would be able to put more students through school, with increased contributions from the Gas for Life Campaign.

Values

The scholarship program started in 2003 with three students. The program grew to 25 students in a year, 28 in the second, and to 100 today. As many as 18 have graduated and are now employed, productive citizens. Another 20 will graduate this year.

Life Scholarships supports high school students in Rizal High School in Pasig, as well as college students in schools such as De La Salle University, University of the Philippines, University of Makati and the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasig.

Life covers education expenses, such as tuition, meal and transportation allowance, uniform and school supply expenses, and other legitimate academic expenses.

It also takes care of the development of the scholars as individuals, guided by the values of leadership, integrity, faith and excellence.

The scholars also go through character-building activities to complement their education, such that they are encouraged to not only get good grades but serve their families and communities as well.

World of difference

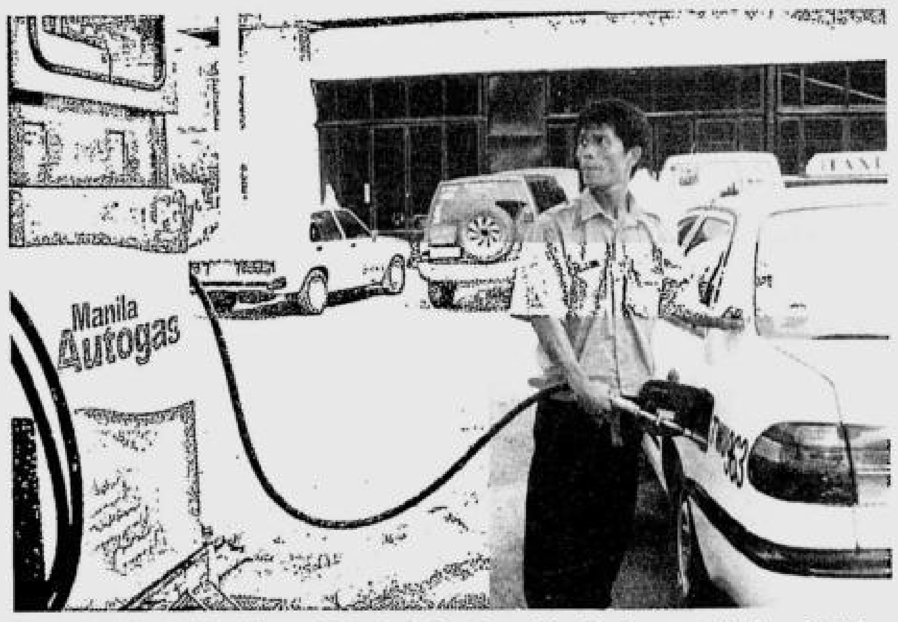
"The smallest contributions make a world of difference," said David Bonifacio, executive director of the Life Scholarship Program. "At 10 centavos for every liter of LPG sold by Manila Autogas, the help will surely go a long way, especially with the increasing number of LPG consumers today."

Gutierrez said LPG sales have been increasing because it costs 30-40 percent less than gasoline, and yet performs just as well.

The increasing trend augurs well for the scholarship program, which targets youth who are hungry for education and life of Christian values.

"We are currently funding seven students and we give the scholarship fund every month," Gutierrez said. "We will continue to do that."

That's good news for students like Mercado and Garcia.



AN ATTENDANT refills an LPG-fueled taxi at a Manila Autogas kiosk on Quirino Avenue. Part of what the company earns is set aside to fund the scholarship program for deserving children.

LGUs' estimated revenue collection said to hit ₱200B in '06

LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS WERE SAID to have collected a total of P200 billion worth of revenue in 2006, thus helping improve the fiscal position of the entire public sector.

The estimated revenue collection was P5.6 billion higher than the P194.4 billion worth of combined revenues collected by municipalities, cities and provinces.

The P68 billion collected by 1,450 municipalities, the P81.9 billion by 210 cities, and the P44.5 billion by the 79 provinces, accounted for the revenue collected by LGUs in 2005.

These amounts are on top of the internal revenue allotment the LGUs receive from the national government.

According to the office of Victor Endriga, president of the Philippine Association of Local Treasurers and Assessors (Phaltra), the projected P200 billion in revenue was brought on by improvements in the efficiency of local tax collection.

Unlike the national government, which has been posting budget deficits for years, LGUs have been positively contributing to the fiscal position of the entire public sector because of their combined budget surpluses.

During the three-day 74th annual convention of Phaltra that ended yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo acknowledged the fiscal performance of LGUs, saying "it helped underpin the nation's long-term growth prospects."

About 3,000 local treasurers and assessors attended the convention held at Camp John Hay Manor Trade and Cultural Center in Baguio City.

During the convention, Endriga said, local government treasurers and assessors vowed to further improve tax collection this year.

Phaltra has been offering its services to the national government, particularly in helping the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) shore up its tax collection to help balance the government's budget.

Endriga earlier said that the national government could tap the assistance of local treasurers in collecting value-added taxes from businesses.

Endriga said that local governments have better communication with businesses located in their respective areas, and are therefore more familiar with their operations.

Endriga also noted that the taxpayers' databases of LGUs are bigger than that of the BIR, noting that many businesses registered with local governments do not bother registering with the BIR nor paying national taxes.

The Department of Finance earlier reported that the public sector posted a surplus of P8.9 billion in January to September last year.

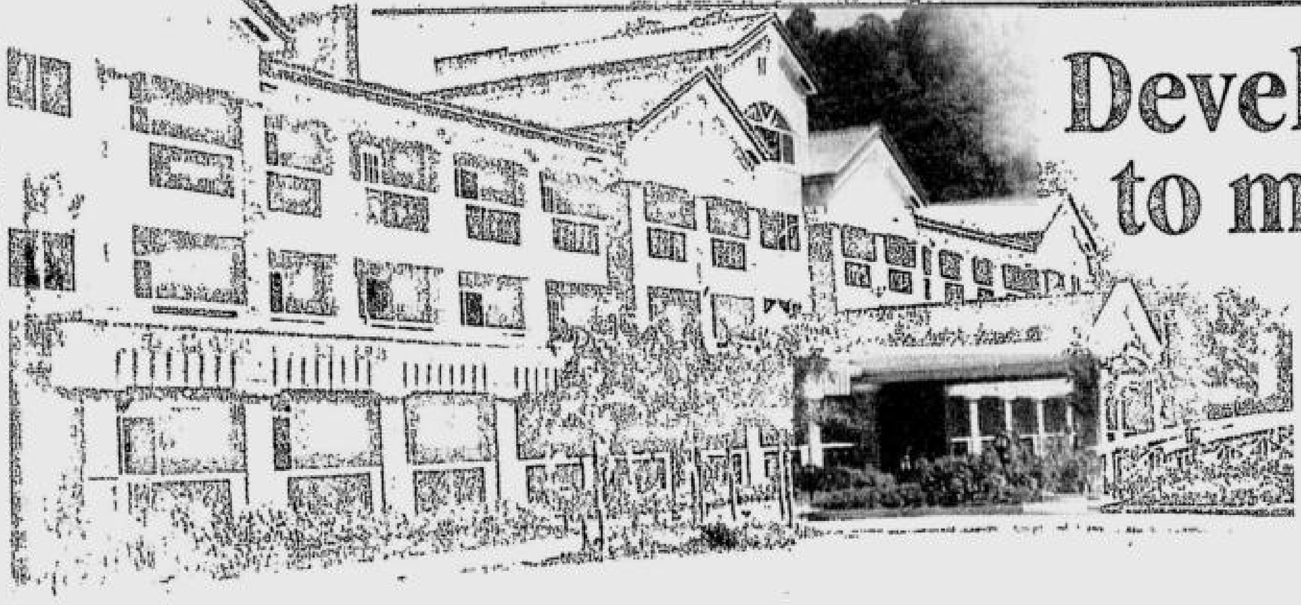
The surplus of the entire public sector was boosted by the P27.806-billion surplus posted by LGUs but was partly offset by the deficit of the national government.

The P27.806-billion surplus by LGUs in the first nine months of last year was higher than the target of only P13.577.

Michelle V. Remo

PROPERTY

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**



THE SUBIC Holiday Villas is a self-contained leisure and retirement community.

Developer lures retirees to make Subic their home

By Charles E. Buban

SUBIC IN ZAMBALES PROvince could be an attractive real estate investment for migrating retirees, both former Filipino nationals as well as foreigners.

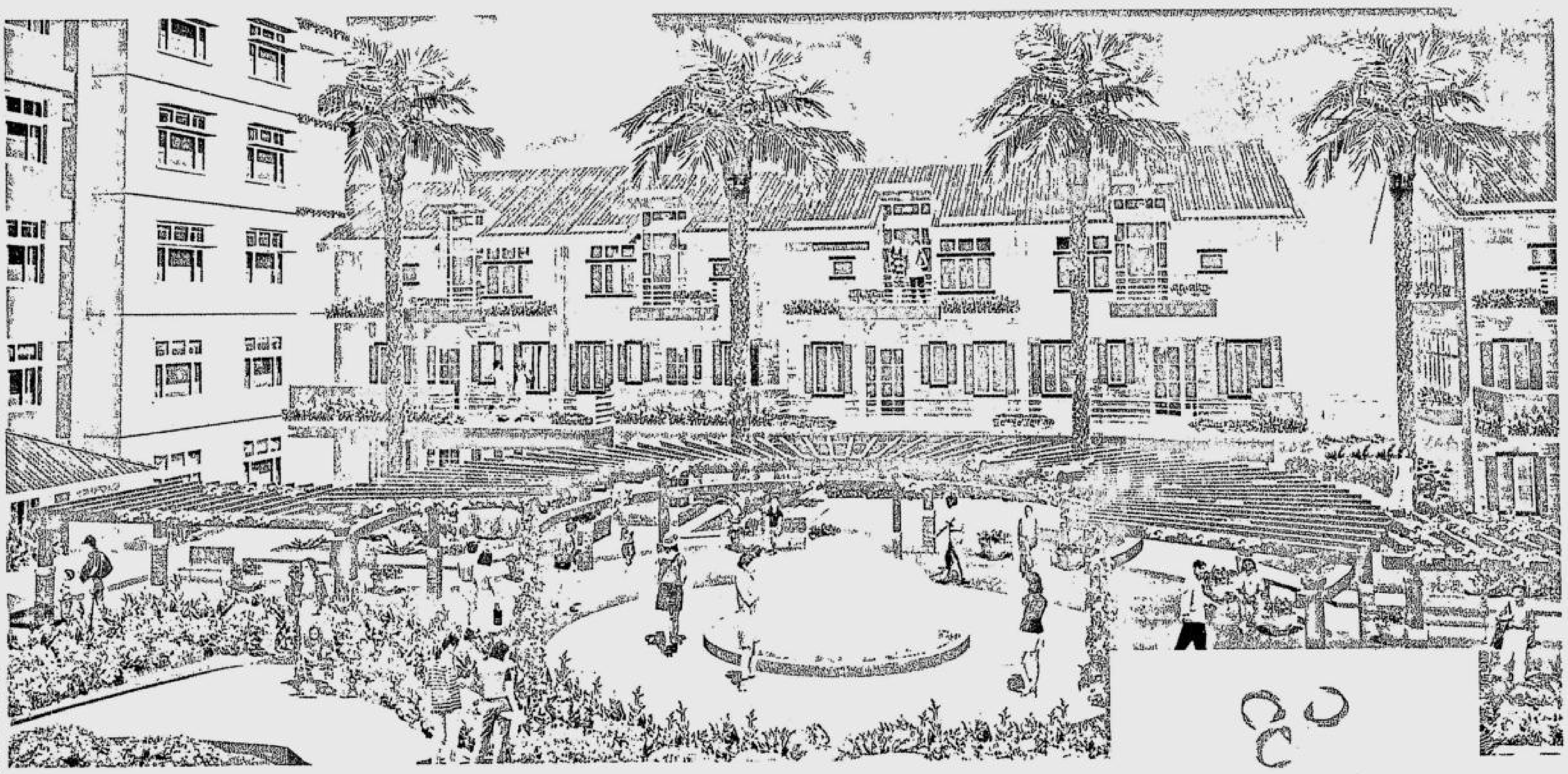
Located 110 kilometers northwest of Metro Manila, Subic has unique features that for developer Quantum Hotels and Resorts are more than enough to attract retirees from abroad.

Subic is nestled between the Zambales mountain range in the east and the Subic Bay in the west, both contributing in providing Subic year-round cool climate as well as picturesque views.

Such topography also makes Subic a destination for those who enjoy the sea (having plenty of beach resorts and dive spots) or commune with nature (several establishments now offer land-based eco-tour, outdoor sports and other nature adventure activities).

"Subic is also fast developing industrial and tourism destination. This is why a number of developers have come here and took the opportu-

DEVELOPER/ B2-2



Manhattan Garden City
AT THE ARANETA CENTER

A Matchless Location at the Metro's Center.

Go from home to the heart of the action in no time. At Manhattan Parkway, the first phase of Manhattan Garden City, enjoy the benefits of living in the country's first-ever transit-oriented development. Experience the freedom to go places with utmost ease via the LRT-2 and MRT-3. And reach the north, east, west and south sides of Metro Manila in one go. What's more, be a walk away from the Araneta Center and its shops, offices, restaurants and entertainment hubs.

Surrounded by the city's key destinations.

Your Parkway home is encircled by everything the city has to offer. And you're just a train ride away from it all. Walk down an exclusive 729-meter-long garden footbridge four stories above street level. Take in its park-like scenery. And arrive at the LRT-2 and MRT-3 stations safely and without the hassles of traffic.

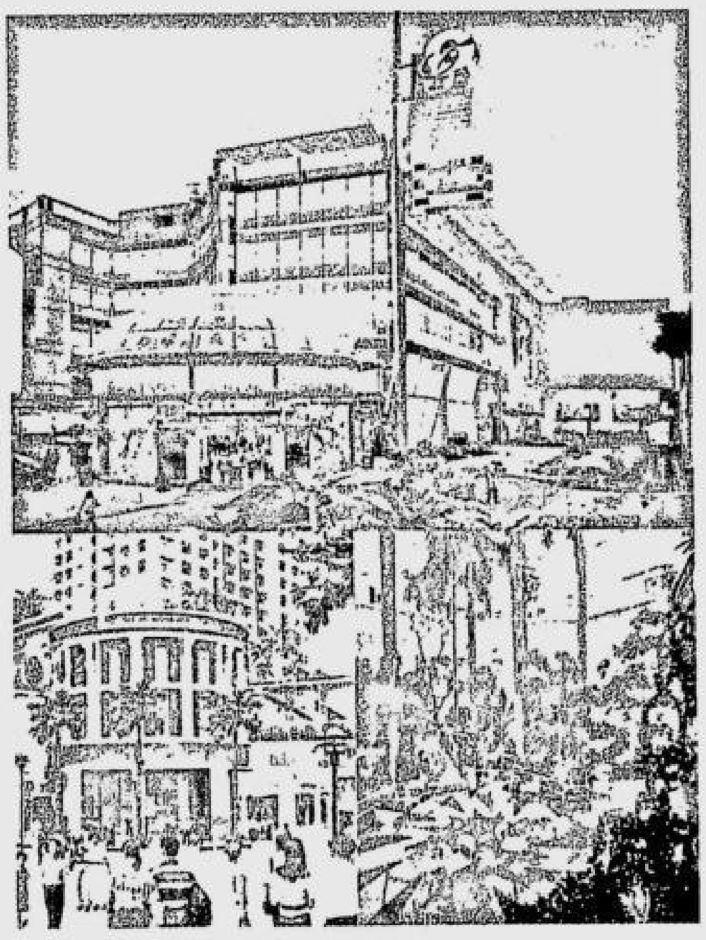
From the LRT-2 along Aurora Boulevard, Ateneo and UP in Quezon City and Manila's university belt are just minutes away. The MRT-3 along EDSA brings Makati, Ortigas and Taft Avenue within easy reach. Both lines join up with the LRT-1, making it easy to go anywhere from Monumento in Caloocan to Baclaran in Parañaque.

Surrounded by the Araneta Center's hot spots.

Be in the middle of a pulsating lifestyle and leisure center: the Araneta Center. From your home, a four-story transfer station with a hotel-style lobby, grand staircase and four passenger elevators brings you to the third level of Gateway Mall, which hosts the Oasis, a unique floating garden. From here, simply walk to the Araneta Coliseum. Or to Rustan's, SM, Shopwise, Ali Mall or Farmers Plaza.

Surrounded by the comforts of home.

When you're done exploring the world outside, your home is just a breath away. Whether it's an executive studio or one-bedroom suite, Manhattan Parkway offers you soothing views of the Araneta Center and Manila Bay. What's more, enjoy hours of active play at the fourth-level garden deck. There are trellised walkways, jogging trails, a fitness station, an indoor sauna/spa and a gym. And if that's not enough, a footbridge leads to more play amenities at the upcoming phases.



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Marcos de Guzman Jr.

WHEN YOU VISIT THE BIG CITIES abroad like Hong Kong, Singapore and New York, you cannot help but wonder why their buildings look new compared to ours, even though these may actually be older.

Could it be due to the type of building materials they use? Is it due to the difference in weather and climactic conditions? Is it because of the pollution? These may all be contributing factors.

Our building exterior surfaces are exposed to harsh conditions day in, day out: extreme heat, high humidity and frequent rain. Concrete surfaces crack. Paint peals and colors fade easily. Mildew accumulates. Diesel fumes, smoke and dust stick to the surfaces, making the colors dull.

The propensity of local designers to use western styles and materials may be another factor. Some designers directly apply what they see abroad even though these may not be suitable to our local conditions.

Economical way

Economy is another factor. Several buildings end up with painted concrete surfaces because this is the most economical and convenient way to finish a building. However, not everyone knows the variations in the quality of paint. A building owner, not knowing any better, may award the project to the lowest bidder without specifying the proper type of paint to use. Sadly, some contractors end up using the inappropriate (often the cheapest) kind of paint that is sure to fade in a year.

The inexpensive ones are latex or acrylic water-based paints, which are ideal for interiors only. A superior type recommended for exteriors is the acrylic solvent-based paint. This is more durable, washable and mildew-resistant. An even better alternative is polyurethane paint, which helps harden the surface, thus making it easier to clean. Although the prices of the paint itself vary considerably, the overall costs, inclusive of labor, do not differ substantially. The benefits of using the proper paint far outweigh the additional cost. When you factor in the frequency of repainting and maintenance work the building would need in the future, you will find that using the right paint at the outset is the more economical in the long run.

Extending life of structures

Proper design and architectural detailing will extend the life and beauty of your structure. Here are a few examples. Correct detailing of parapets, moldings and drip molds would reduce maintenance cost. Dust accumulation and rainwater can be disastrous to your finish, so measures to minimize these must be studied carefully. Ancient Roman builders have mastered the art of ensuring that their structures do not pool water or collect dust significantly. Designers could learn a lot from their technique.

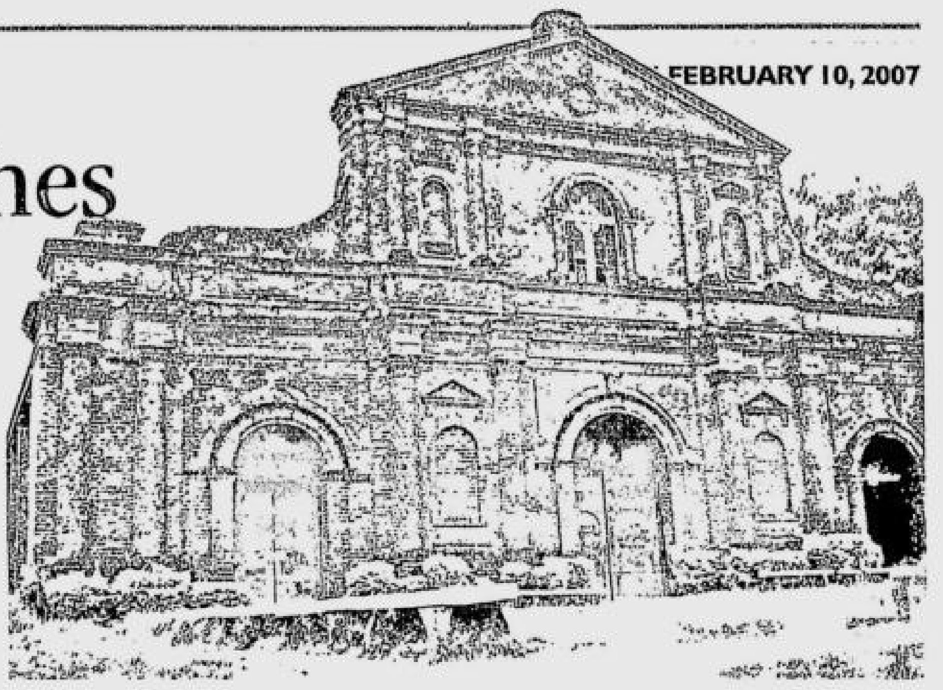
Identify which parts of the structure deteriorate more easily and plan for it. You may use alternative finishes like natural stone, brick or tile for those areas. On the other hand, you may paint surfaces with a darker hue to conceal dirt or stains. A wainscot or a band separating the lower and upper levels might be helpful. What's more, with this technique, you need not repaint the whole house if only the lower portion is dirty or showing signs of wear.

The right roofing design would best protect your building and exterior finish, aside from enhancing comfort within the house of course. A properly insulated roof reduces temperature and humidity on your walls, thus extending the life of their appearance. Proper roofing also protects surfaces from direct sunlight, strong rain, and debris-carrying wind.

Better materials

Those who can afford it use metal and glass claddings. These could be better materials for your structure since they are more lightweight compared to concrete and paint. However, if not maintained properly it could work just as badly. Glass can be ruined by acid rain and lose its clarity. Metal can tarnish or acquire dents and scratches.

Sometimes, we just have to realize and accept the conditions we are living in. Although we have begun to attempt to improve air quality through the "Clean Air Act," it will still take time before the desired effects are attained. I do not think our weather conditions will change anytime soon. Therefore, it all comes down to improving design and using proper materials if we want to keep that "new" look to our structures for a longer time. We just have to put in more thought to the design and be a bit more creative with the materials.



AN OLD church in Cagayan Valley, with its brick walls giving it a timeless beauty.

There are styles and finishes out there that are ideal for our current conditions. In the '70s, noted architect Leandro Locsin made use of unpainted surfaces that are as goodlooking then as to this day. The Spanish friars have used clay and adobe bricks that gain more character as they get older. Readily available natural stones like granite, adobe, sandstone and marble can withstand the harshest conditions. They are also cooler and lend a distinct quality to the building.

Modern tech

Modern technology has produced awesome chemicals which, when applied to most surfaces, enable self-cleaning when activated by sunlight. A Japanese firm has developed fire-retardant chemicals for wood so it does not burn. This technology will again encourage builders to utilize wood as a surface finish. We must look to the schools and laboratories to discover more new finishes and methods to improve existing materials.

Designers must do some research of their own to come up with the perfect match of style and substance to their buildings, all the while with an eye to helping the owners extend its beauty and usefulness. This may even result to us achieving our own architectural character, our very own Filipino style.

A BREATHTAKING bird's eye view of Mayfield Park Residences

Starting the year right with Mayfield Park Residences

AS 2007 BEGINS, WE HOPE ANEW FOR A better tomorrow for us and for our family. Many working dads and moms are hoping they could start the year right by spending lots of quality time with their family.

One of DMCI Homes' prime developments, Mayfield Park Residences in Pasig City knows this all too well. DMCI Homes considered the needs and wants of the family and created a family-friendly community that values togetherness, safety and serenity.

Asian-Japanese theme

Engineer Alfredo R. Austria, DMCI Homes managing director, said that at Mayfield Park Residences, they thought of using an Asian-Japanese theme to convey an atmosphere of peace and serenity for its future residents. He wanted Mayfield Park Residences to convey peace and serenity.

He explained the Asian concept: "It's peaceful and tranquil, you are in a Zen environment that is simple, so you will be at peace. We did away with loud colors because we know that your home should be a respite from all the confusion outside."

ENGINEER Alfredo R. Austria, DMCI Homes managing director

Maximized space

Mayfield Park Residences sits in a 3.2-hectare lot but with the way the buildings were laid out, it feels so much more than three hectares. The architects really maximized the space so that there are enough open spaces to help make the residents not feel hemmed in by the confines of condominium living. In fact, 60 percent of the total land area is allocated for gardens, koi ponds and wide open spaces.

The buildings reflected earth tones and were crafted in sleek lines to suggest a place that is primarily for the residents' rest and relaxation. There are nine buildings, all whimsically named after exotic locations in Asia: Sentosa, Mandala, Seoul, Nagoya, Mallaca, Kyoto, Istana, Daroma and Asiana.

If the names of the buildings alone do not evoke an Oriental vibe, the beautifully designed clubhouse complete with a small bridge over a koi pond would surely hit the point home. The clubhouse and the surrounding area is really one of the things that make Mayfield Park Residences special.

Round-the-clock security

The security provided in Mayfield Park Residences is also an advantage to the residents, Austria said. "Your safety is not entirely secured in a subdivision because of its size. It's really hard to post enough guards to cover the entire area and there are security risks because of this. Here, the residents are highly secured for 24 hours." Residents are given round-the-clock security to ensure their safety and privacy.

A playground rests a few steps away from the beautifully designed swimming pool while jogging and biking paths, a basketball, a badminton court, a billiard hall, and a karaoke room give opportunities for the residents to pursue their hobbies and sports activities without going out of Mayfield Park. The residents also have free wireless Internet access at the 2-story clubhouse.

Spacious units

All nine buildings have single-loaded corridors, elevators and, forever thinking of the comfort and convenience of the residents, DMCI Homes provided a spacious drying and storage area for the unit owners.

The units are spacious due to the effective design which maximized the space. The master bedroom in the two-bedroom unit is surprisingly roomy as a bed and a large wardrobe can fit comfortably inside and leave enough moving space for the occupants.

With Mayfield Park Residences' numerous resort-type amenities and features, it's like taking your family on a vacation at a resort and staying 365 days a year.

"I invite them to take a look at Mayfield Park or even at other developments of DMCI Homes before they choose. Scrutinize and consider everything that other developers are offering them before they choose and we're confident that if they are in our target market, we can best meet their needs," Austria concluded.

For further inquiries about Mayfield Park Residences please call our hotline at 888-3333 or visit www.dmcihomes.com.

THE BEAUTIFULLY designed swimming pool beside the equally beautiful Mayfield Park Residences clubhouse

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Dubai investors eye property dev't ventures in RP

BIG INVESTORS IN DUBAI WHO are keen on investing anywhere in the world are eyeing property development ventures in tropical Asia, particularly the Philippines.

This was revealed by Filipino-American Susan Barlin after successfully convincing the leaders and members of the CEO (chief executive officers) Club Dubai to join the 1st annual Asian International Real Estate Expo and Conference (AIREEC) slated at the PICC and the World Trade Center on Dec. 6-10 this year.

Barlin is the proponent of Aireec, which is geared to bring the world's real estate and tourism-related industries to Manila to showcase Asia as a global second home destination.

Investment opportunities

"And members of CEO Club Dubai are joining Aireec to look for investment opportunities, not only in Asia, but also in the rest of the world," Barlin said.

CEO Club Dubai is one of the local chapters of CEO Club UAE, a member of the CEO Clubs Worldwide with over 10,000 members in the United States, China, Korea, Japan, India, Pakistan and the Middle East.

"These investors are among the thousands of others joining Aireec to see for themselves what Asia can offer to the world's trillion-dollar second-home market and where they can strategically invest in to fill up certain industry gaps," Barlin said.

Second homes

"This huge market comprises the world's 42- to 60-year-olds who have been buying houses outside their native countries as second homes," said Barlin, president liaison to the Philippines of the 1.3 million-strong National Association of Realtors (NAR) of the United States.

NAR is a member of International Association of Real Estate Associations (Icrea), which comprises alliances in 24 countries worldwide and also promotes Aireec (www.realtor.org/cipshome.nsf/pages/intlmeetings).

One of Icrea's founding members is the Real Estate Institute of Australia (Reia), whose members are also participating in Aireec.

Reia is the national professional association for the real estate industry in Australia and a principal member of International Real Estate Federation (Fiabci).

8 regions

Reia's participation in Aireec brings to eight the number of the world's regions that will see action in this international event in Manila. Aside from Australia, these regions are Europe, North America, Northeast Asia, Middle East, Southeast Asia, South America and the Indian peninsula.

From these regions will come most of the 5,000 conference delegates and 400 expo exhibitors in Aireec since only 20 percent at the most are allotted for local participation.

Supported by the departments of Tourism and Foreign Affairs, Aireec is the brainchild of Barlin, who has chosen the Philippines as the venue for its debut.

Promoting Aireec

Barlin has been promoting Aireec through roadshow presentations and speaking engagements in various parts of the world.

An international real estate specialist, Barlin is the CEO of US-based realty conglomerate Barlin International Group and publisher of several industry-related publications.

Being organized by Expo, Convention and Promotions Inc. (Ecpil), Aireec will provide the participants the fastest way to achieve global presence, buildup image, open new markets, gain new partners, learn about competitors, widen network, initiate sales, and get a feel of the world's business environment. More details on Aireec can be obtained from Ecpi (call 729-2477, e-mail info@aireec.com, or visit www.aireec.com).

"Instead of Asia's industry players going too far abroad for business or sales opportunities, Aireec is bringing the world to Asia through the Philippines," said Dan Garcia of Ecpi.

Developer lures retirees to make . . .

From page B2-1

nity to set up projects in and around Subic that targets retirees, a growing market here in the Philippines," said Joey Bernardino, VP for sales and marketing of Subic Holiday Villas.

Viable market

Bernardino explained the company fully recognizes the retirees as a viable market and that the Philippines can easily capture this if its retirement infrastructure are fully developed.

Citing Philippine Retirement Authority projections, he reported that a fully developed retirement industry could create four million jobs and generate a potential revenue of P464 billion a month or P27 trillion per annum if these retirees' $1,500 monthly expense are spent here.

The PRA reported that the country can support around one million to three million retirees.

Retirement package

"But for retirees to come here, any place needs a developed retirement package that would include health care and retirement village. In the case of Subic, there are now a number of hospitals existing around the area and with the opening of Subic Holiday Villas, retirees now have another reason to settle in Subic," Bernardino said.

Early this year, the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, which manages the freeport, announced the construction of the P200-million Bay Pointe Hospital and Medical Center Inc., a state-of-the-art health establishment that will initially set up 100 beds.

"This development will assure retirees Subic is addressing their concerns. Additionally, our project is an accredited facility of the PRA so Subic Holiday Villas has its own medical clinic aside from having the usual facilities including a business center, library, a sauna/health spa, walking and jogging path.

QUANTUM Hotels and Resorts hopes that with its latest project, retirees will now have another reason to call Subic their new home.

Masterplanned community

Located inside the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Subic Holiday Villas is a masterplanned four-hectare leisure and retirement development.

"The project adopted a Mediterranean design with each unit featuring high pitched tile roofing, well-appointed living, dining and kitchen areas. We also designed Subic Holiday Villas with business travelers in mind, so we equipped each unit with work desk and we intend to provide wireless Internet connections," described Bernardino.

Units are available in four types: studio (36 sq m), the one-bedroom (48 sq m and 68 sq m) and two-bedroom unit (72 sq.m).

Ideal, cost-wise

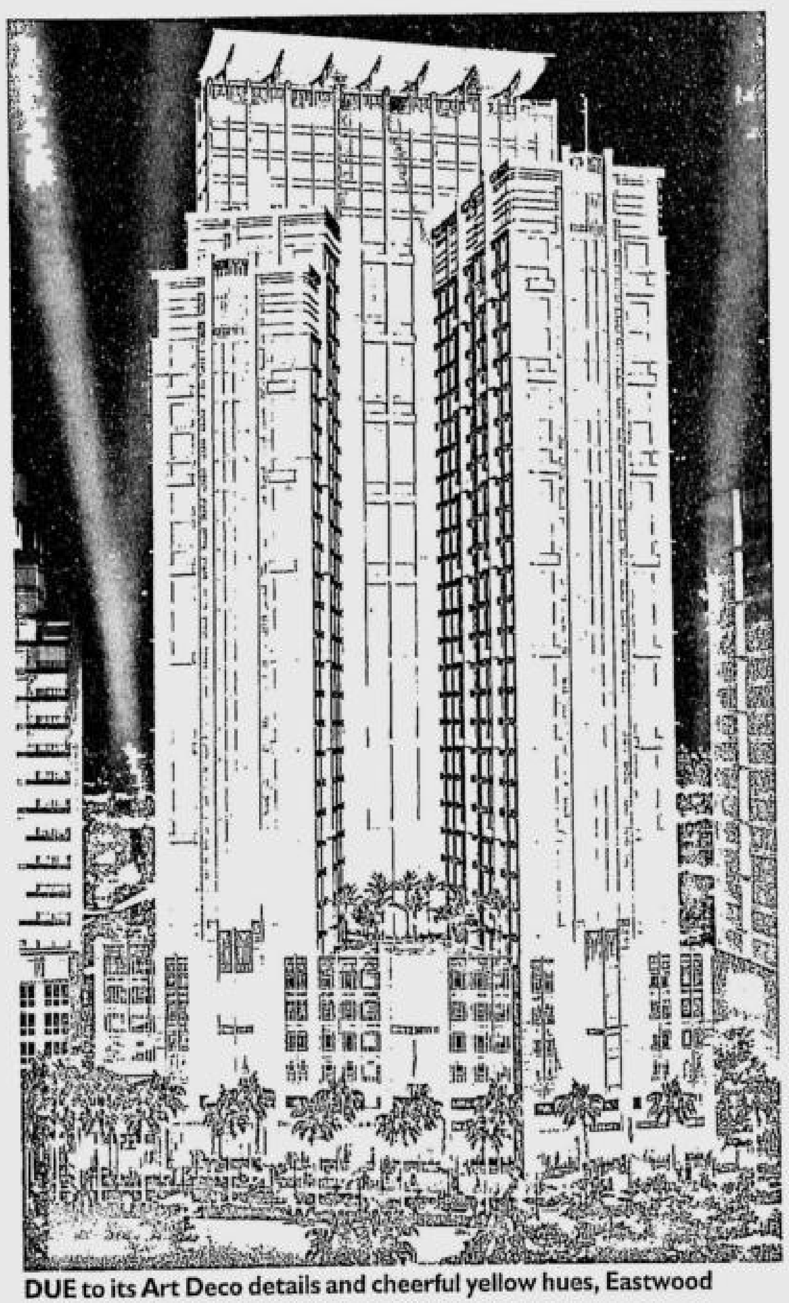
Bernardino said living in Subic is ideal, cost-wise considering that an American retiree for example (who would likely prefer Subic because of its history—once the site of the United States' largest naval base in Asia), may receive around $9,000 a year.

"This amount will not be enough if that person will spend it in the United States. However, this will go a long way here in the Philippines or in Subic in particular, especially with its duty-free shops and supermarkets," he said.

Indeed, Subic Holiday Villas is perfect destination for retirees wanting a clean environment, beautiful surroundings and fully equipped facilities.

Developer Quantum Hotels and Resorts is also known for its other projects that now include the BSA Tower, BSA Suites and Perla Mansion, all fully furnished apartments located in the Makati central business district.

Megaworld launches Eastwood LeGrand


DUE to its Art Deco details and cheerful yellow hues, Eastwood LeGrand will glisten every night.

THE GROWING EASTWOOD CITY COMMUNITY now grows even bigger and better, as top condominium developer Megaworld Corp. launches Eastwood LeGrand.

Megaworld couldn't have chosen a more auspicious name for its newest project. The building's Art Deco details, cheerful yellow hues and window trims in plain white are reminiscent of the signature architecture that make New York's Empire State Building and Chrysler Building famous all over the world.

Decorative moldings

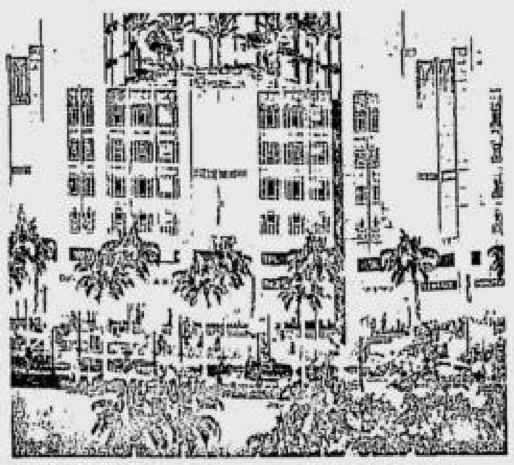
Like the Chrysler Building, Eastwood LeGrand will feature decorative moldings on its very top that will make it distinguishable—and iconic—within the vicinity of Eastwood City. Modern stonework adorns its ground-level columns. With American Art Deco being inspired by its French counterpart, then it's just fitting that the grandest French interior designs welcome residents at the Eastwood LeGrand lobby.

This new project will rise at Eastwood's newest, most fashionable neighborhood yet: the Palm District. Tall palm trees line up along its main road, making Eastwood LeGrand just a few steps away from the thick of the action of the restaurants and hip, happening places at Eastwood City Walk 1 & 2. It is also a mere stroll away from the top office buildings on Eastwood Avenue.

Luxurious amenities

Just as the façade and details of the building exude luxury, the amenities are as luxurious. The seventh-floor podium deck features a swimming pool with in-water lounge and jet spa, perfect for some swimming and relaxation after a hard day's work. An outdoor fitness station makes it convenient to de-stress. Meanwhile, parents can spend quality time with their kids at the wading pool, tot lot and playground. Plus, the amenities area are exquisitely landscaped to make residents feel like they're in a Class A resort every day.

"Eastwood LeGrand residents will enjoy Eastwood City's overall live, work, play concept. Their plush new home will rise in the fast-rising Palm District. This is specially ideal for expatriates and executives who work at our Grade A office developments within Eastwood City, and for those who love the vibrant shopping and lifestyle choices on offer at Eastwood City Walk," noted Eastwood Property Holdings Inc. VP for Marketing John Natividad.


EASTWOOD LeGrand's podium deck will feature top retail and lifestyle choices at the ground floor and amenities at the seventh floor.

THE NEW Palm District is just a few steps away from major office locators at Cyber One Building and IBM Plaza.

TOP chefs prepare their fresh culinary treasures every day at Eastwood City Walk 1 and 2.

Near top institutions

The location also puts a premium on parents who prioritize the education of their children. Top institutions such as Ateneo, UP and Miriam are nearby, providing quality education from pre-school to the college level.

To experience luxurious living only at Eastwood LeGrand, just drop by the Eastwood City Information Center on Eastwood's famed Orchard Road soonest. Or call 421-4243 and 421-4247 today for a viewing appointment.

Spending breakfast to midnight . . .

From page B2-4

Brittany Bay Commercial Complex. A stockholder of In The Mood, she confessed that it was the stunning architecture that first made her consider it as a venue for their ballroom dancing club which used to be at the center of Malate.

"When you drive by South Superhighway, one cannot miss the eye-catching Victorian masterpiece that is the Brittany Bay Commercial Complex. Manila's most popular restaurants, such as Dencio's, Figaro, Grappa's, Murasaki, Pancake House, Kettle Corn, Brother's Burgers and Hap Chan, are now up and running at the complex. Brittany Bay is the best venue for In The Mood as the complex levels with In The Mood's inclination to the upscale market. A sense of exclusivity and security breathes though the complex which is perfect for In The Mood's clientele."

Realization of a dream

A pillar of the Malate nightlife, In The Mood was the center of the ballroom dancing aficionado's universe. And its move to the Brittany Bay Commercial Complex, Lorna said, is the realization of a dream. Here, the ballroom is far more luxurious and vibrant. Red velvet furniture, live band music, and excellent cuisine from the LJC Restaurant Group have resulted in a very exciting and newly-improved In The Mood that both its old and new clients are sure to enjoy.

Passion is something that the Brittany Bay Commercial Complex shares with both In The Mood and Pancake House. Its interesting mix of restaurant outlets cater to the discriminating palate of its sophisticated clients who truly understand what it means to live well. An essential part of the Brittany Bay community, this commercial area is truly one of the most coveted addresses south of Manila today. For inquiries on the Brittany Bay, please call 850-2868 or 850-3084, or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

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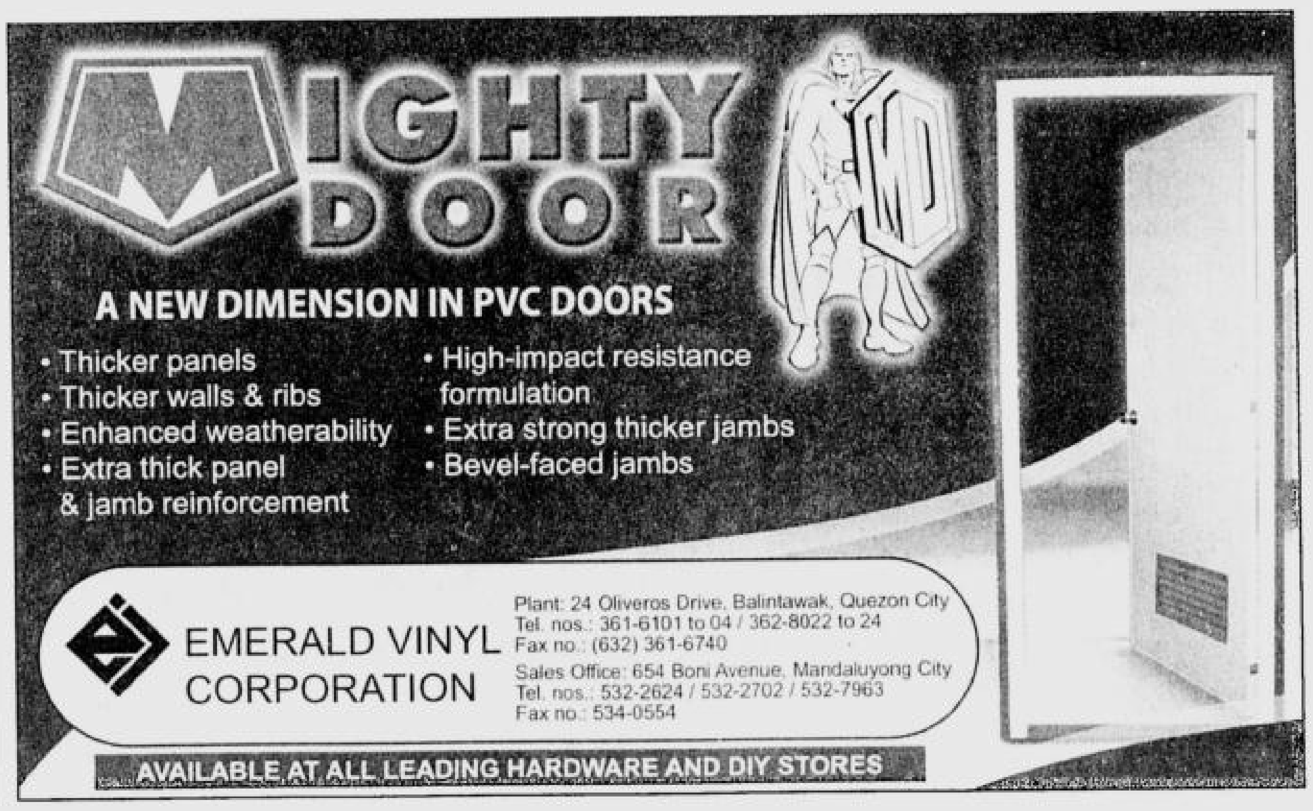
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Own a LUCKY HOME the LITE Way Only at Manhattan Garden City

Are you a newly married couple who are looking forward to owning a new home? Well, you'll be extremely lucky this coming Chinese New Year! **HOMELITE**, the revolutionary product launched by industry leaders **Megaworld Corporation** and **Security Bank,** makes your dream a reality!

Manhattan Garden City, which is strategically located at the Araneta Center and boasts of direct connection to the LRT and MRT, is a pilot project of Megaworld for Homelite. As a homebuyer, you can take advantage of the lowest interest rate ever -- 5.50% annually for a five-year loan term at no down payment. "This is ideal if you have a strong cash flow and want to save years of paying interest," noted Megaworld Central Properties Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu.

An ideal alternative is to stretch the home loan to 10, 15 or even 25 years to pay, with affordable monthly payments. The rates are also very attractive: from 8.50% to 11.00% annually and can be fixed for as long as 25 years. "At the longest term of 25 years, our 45-square meter 1-bedroom unit with balcony comes out at a very affordable P25,378 monthly," Yu added. The same flexibility of low interest and low monthly amortizations are also being offered for 2br units, making it an ideal investment.

Interested? Then you better check out the 1-bedroom model unit soon at the Manhattan Garden City showroom at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall. Its Modern Asian motif will surely bring a lifetime of good luck and happiness for you and your future kids. Or call 810-3333 or email inquire@themanhattangardencity.com for a viewing appointment.

Young couples find the Modern Asian-themed 1-bedroom model unit of Manhattan Garden City ideal for their needs.

Many young couples check out the Manhattan Garden City 1-bedroom model unit everyday at the third level of Gateway Mall.

Through Homelite, this stylish Manhattan Garden City 1-bedroom unit comes out at a very affordable P25,378 monthly.

ADVT

Spending breakfast to midnight at Posadas-Brittany Bay Complex

THE POSADAS-BRITANNY BAY COMMERCIAL Complex welcomes two new tenants to its growing family of restaurants. Residents and guests can now enjoy a hearty breakfast at Pancake House every morning and dance the night away at In The Mood.

Located on South Superhighway just off the Sucat toll gate, the commercial center is part of a masterfully planned community by maverick real property developer Brittany Corp. in partnership with the Marfori-Posadas family. Doña Estela Marfori-Posadas of the illustrious and landed Marfori-Posadas family began a legacy of excellence in real estate developments by initially venturing into residential communities. The Marfori-Posadas clan, with Doña Estela at the helm, continues the legacy and has added commercial developments into their portfolio through their partnership with Brittany Corp.

The architecture of the Brittany Bay Commercial Complex is characterized by bay windows and ornate adornments and is inspired by the lifestyle of San Francisco. It is this unique blend of sophistication and coziness that the commercial area hopes to mirror with its multi-level structure that can accommodate both large gatherings and intimate dates, beautifully landscaped grounds that shield diners from the hustle and bustle of commuter traffic along the highway, and carefully chosen dining outlets that cater to a more refined palate.

Taking advantage of this inspired combination is Cecille Perez, franchise owner of Pancake House at the Brittany Bay Commercial Complex. A resident of Brittany Corp.'s La Posada, she found herself in the best position to set up her own business upon purchase of her property. There was a vacancy at the commercial area and she immediately saw the potential.

Unique opportunity

She is no stranger to managing her own business, her family has been handling several franchises of various food outlets in the past. When she moved to La Posada with her husband and daughter, it seemed only natural for her to set up her own business somewhere near her home. Indeed, the Pancake House at the Brittany Bay Commercial Complex provided a unique opportunity for her to manage both a business and a household more efficiently since her travel time was no more than three minutes.

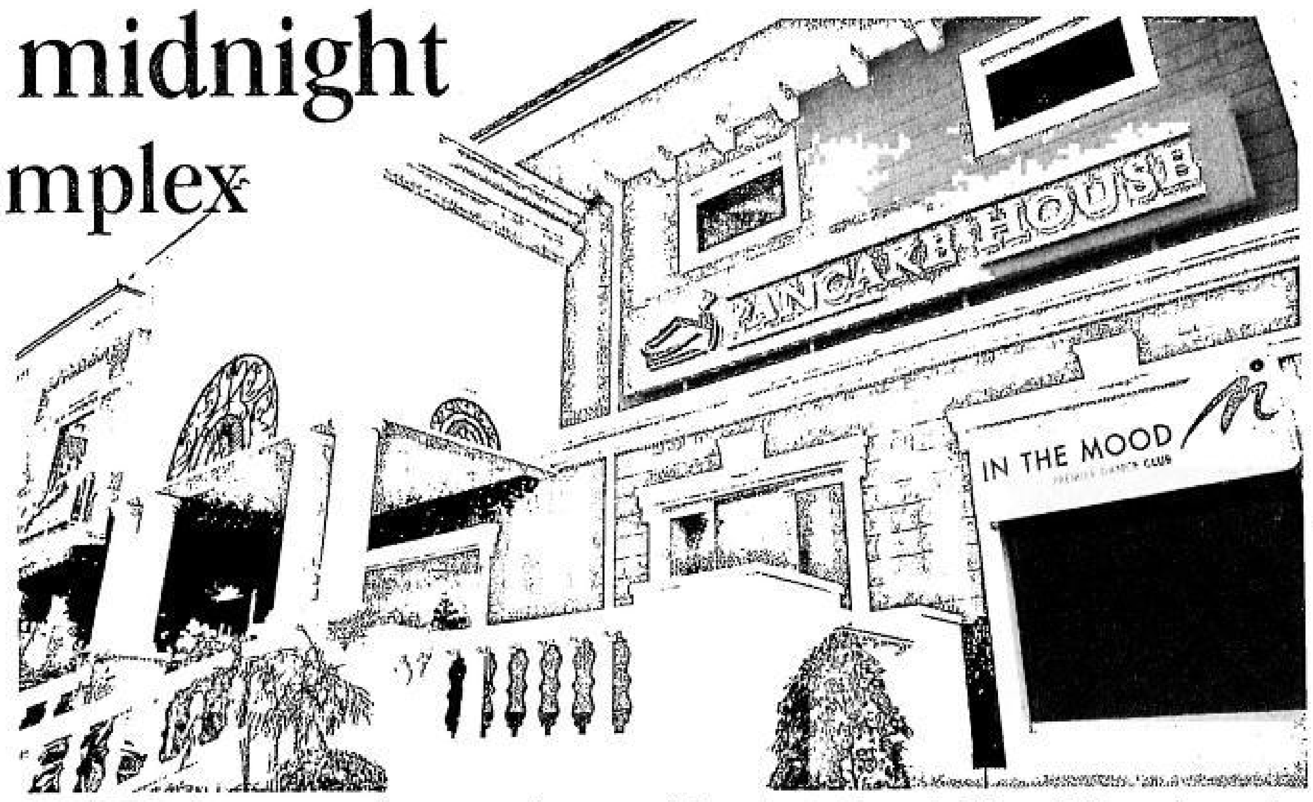
"When we purchased the house, we already thought of getting a space at the commercial area because it's nearer and really so accessible. It was also nice because my daughter also goes to school in Alabang. So everything is really here," Cecille said.

Though the store has been operational for only over a month, it has become a choice meeting place among friends during the weekdays, and a venue for family gatherings on weekends.

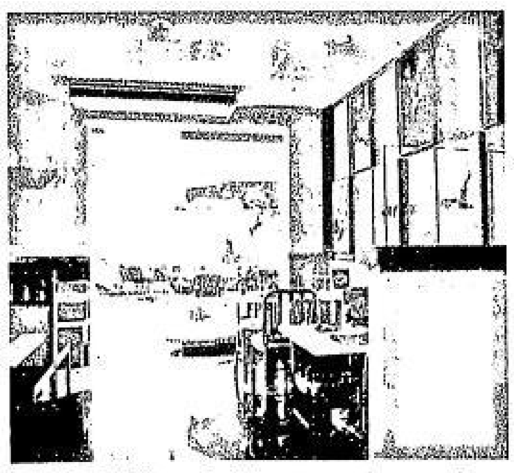
Stunning architecture

The visually-arresting façade, on the other hand, was what attracted Lorna Ambas to the

SPENDING/ B2-3



BRITTANY Bay homeowners and patrons now have more dining and entertainment choices with the newly opened establishments Pancake House and In The Mood.



PANCAKE House's light atmosphere makes for a charming all-day breakfast place.

An oasis in the city

IT IS GOOD NEWS THAT LEADING AFFORDABLE condominium developer Phinma Property Holdings Corp. (Phinma Properties)—the first property developer in the country to be triple-certified for quality, environment and safety—has decided to provide what's missing in the urban setting.

To be located in Commonwealth Ave., Phinma Properties' newest addition to its condominium township projects in Quezon City is envisioned to provide its target home buyers both the typical metropolitan setting in a green environment including one's own garden.

Spanish-inspired enclave

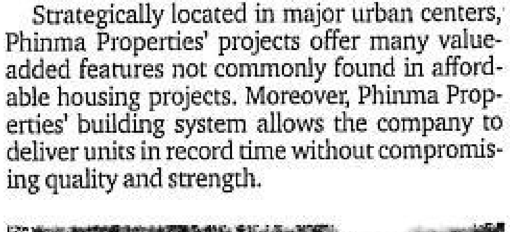
A Spanish-inspired enclave comprising medium-rise condominium buildings amid a rolling terrain and lush landscape, San Benissa Garden Villas will offer "Garden Units" in three of its nine villas where buyers can have the best of condo living while having an exclusive use of a backyard as part of his unit.

Phinma Properties president and CEO Wille J. Uy says, "The salient feature of the township is the three secluded buildings to be called "Garden Villas" with each unit to have approximately 10 square meters of backyard space, while six buildings will be outside the secluded 'gardened' area."

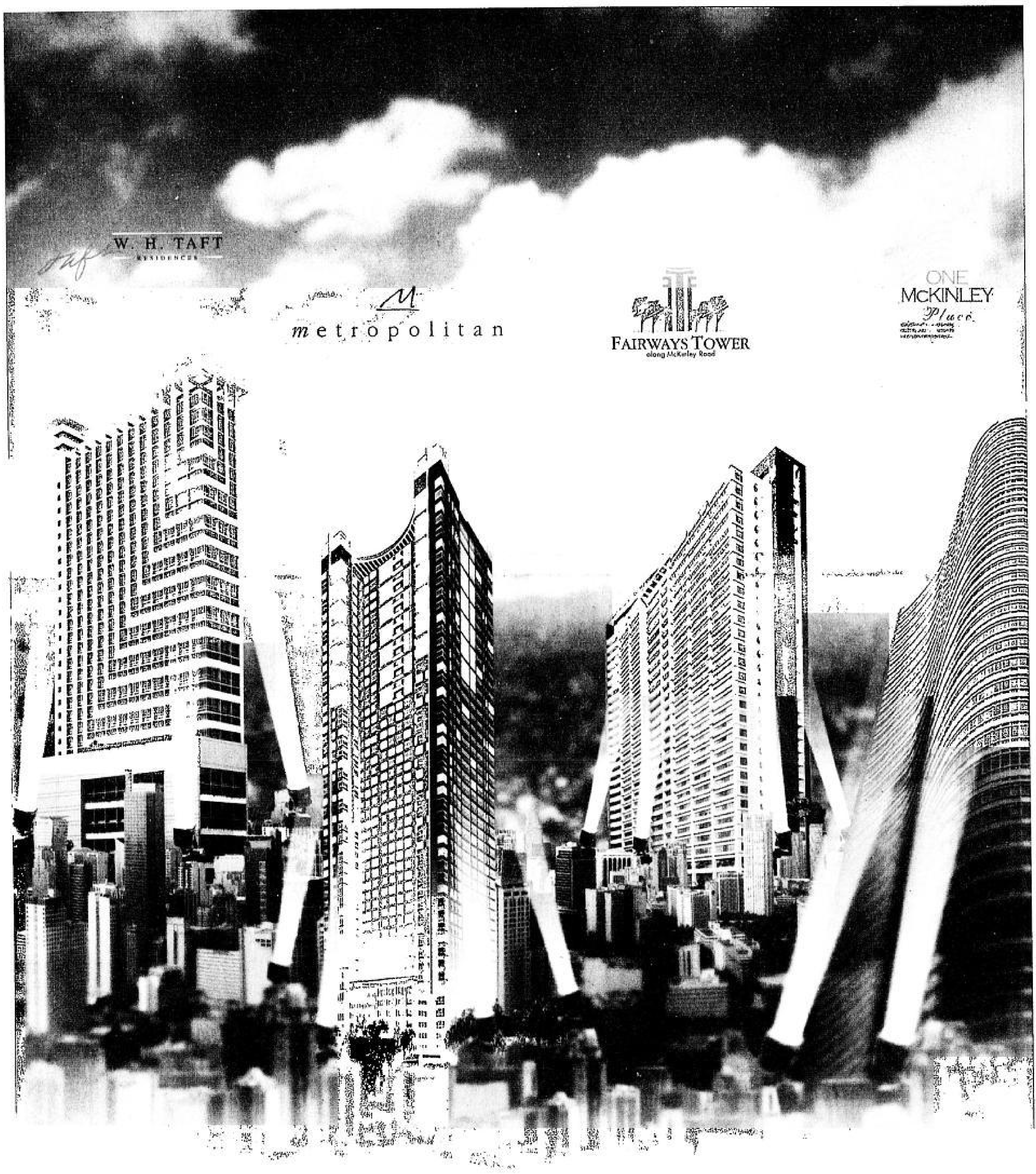
783 units

With launch date set in January of this year and with starting prices at P624,000 per unit, San Benissa will consist of a total of 783 units of medium-rise buildings. Amenities of the condo township consist of a roof deck in each building, a clubhouse, a badminton court and a gym.

Strategically located in major urban centers, Phinma Properties' projects offer many value-added features not commonly found in affordable housing projects. Moreover, Phinma Properties' building system allows the company to deliver units in record time without compromising quality and strength.



SAN Benissa Archway



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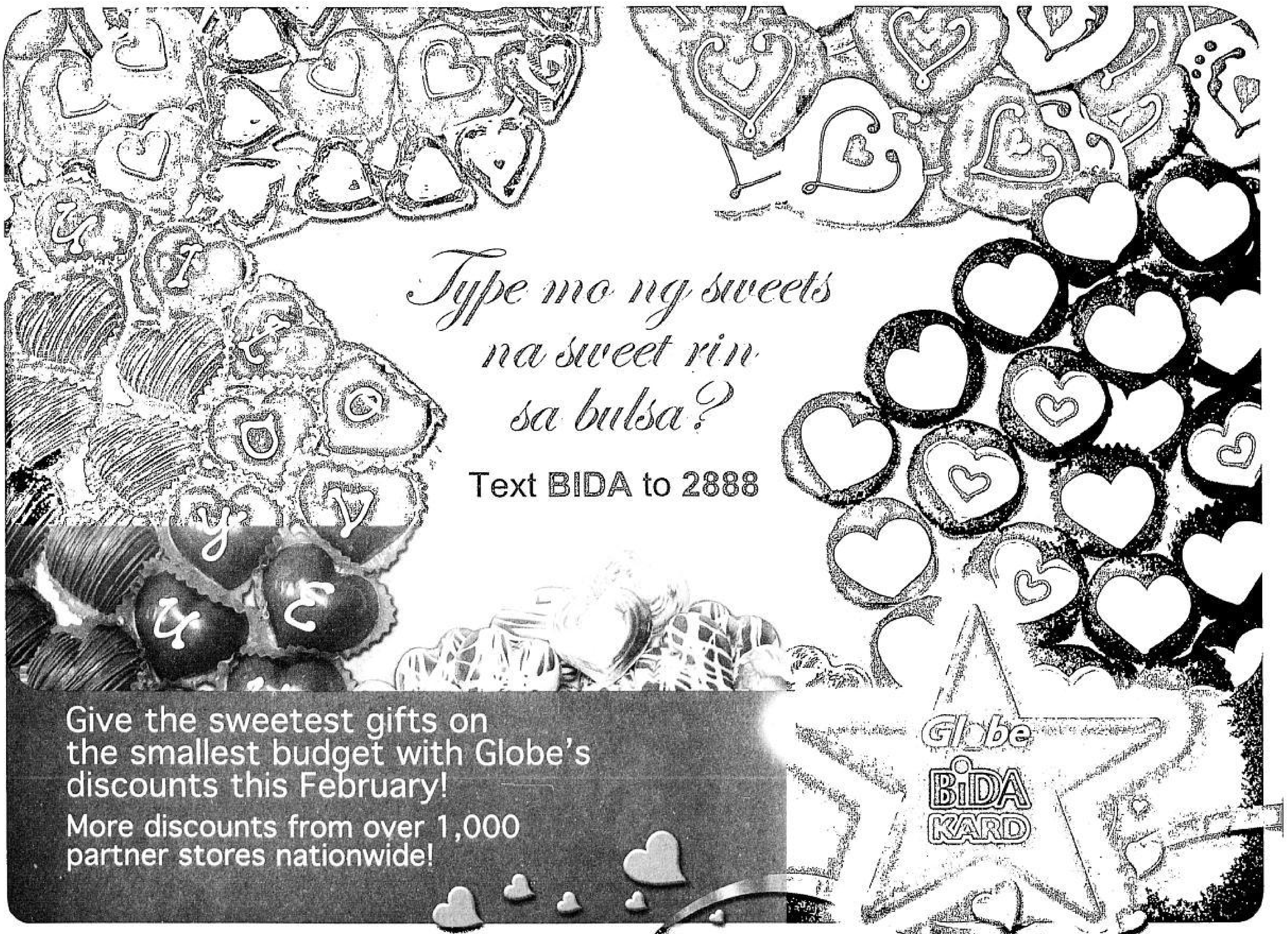
Hair: Melvin Mojica
Cover Star: Sony Ericsson Z610i endorser Joan Bitagcol wearing Mich Dulce for DMC


Type mo ng sweets
na sweet rin
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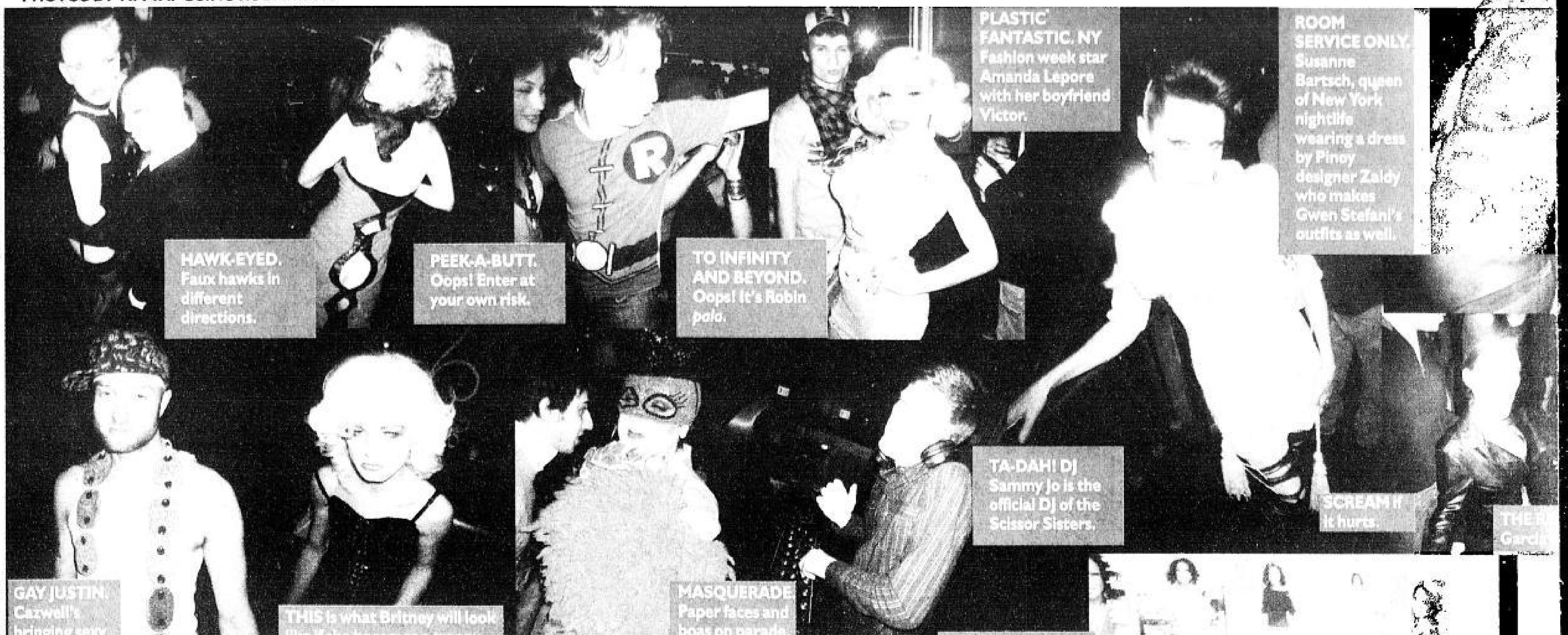
Cebu – Tourist's Haven Gift Shop, Aurum Jewelry, Holland Tulips **and many more**!

Visit http://bidakard.globe.com.ph for a complete list of partner establishments and their perks.

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP USING KODAK V610



HAWK-EYED. Faux hawks in different directions.

PEEK-A-BUTT. Oops! Enter at your own risk.

TO INFINITY AND BEYOND. Oops! It's Robin *pala*.

PLASTIC FANTASTIC. NY Fashion week star Amanda Lepore with her boyfriend Victor.

ROOM SERVICE ONLY. Susanne Bartsch, queen of New York nightlife wearing a dress by Pinoy designer Zaldy who makes Gwen Stefani's outfits as well.

GAY JUSTIN. Cazwell's bringing sexy back.

THIS is what Britney will look like if she becomes a tranny.

MASQUERADE. Paper faces and boas on parade.

TA-DAH! DJ Sammy Jo is the official DJ of the Scissor Sisters.

SCREAM if it hurts.

THE R[illegible] Garci

I ♥ PiNoYork

REBEL OF ALL CAUSES. Mohawk madman.

TATTOO-TREAT. Astroboy goes punk.

TOP OF HIS GAME. PJ Pascual, proudly Pinoy, one of the editors in Oprah Magazine.

Tim Yap

YOU KNOW THAT GLOBAL warming is upon us when, at the supposed peak of winter, the weather in New York City is as cold as a sunny day in Tagaytay.

With this knowledge in mind, I let go of my thick winter jackets and just packed my Viktor jeans and velvet jackets and off to Nueva I went. Somehow, my coming into any city brings about a change of weather (one time it was raining in Paris then became sunny as soon as I got there), and as soon as I landed in JFK, it started snowing.

I've never been one to check the weather-back home even if it was signal number 31, I still managed to get to wherever I needed to go. And I don't exactly dress according to season. I layer during summer and wear cotton tees during colder months. I remember coming from Miami to New York one night—I was wearing my Panama straw hat with matching Havaianas. The minute I stepped out of the airport—the whole city was covered in white! I had to pretend that I was native New Yorker just trying to make a statement. And the statement was *"Brrrrr..."*

Speaking of statements, the first party I attended was **Susanne Bartsch's** Room Service party, which was a transvestite-hipsters-stylista-model-artist-everything parade. Everyone fluanted their exhibitionist sides (there was a passage to a gentlemen's strip club right beside it). I apporached the grand dame of New York nightlife and complimented her on her outfit. "It's by Zaldy, this Filipino designer friend of mine," she told me. Apparently, this Zaldy (more on him in another issue) guy is the same guy who does the clothes of the Scissor Sisters and Gwen Stefani. I love it!

Pinoy pride

Perennially Pinoy pride fueled, even with wind chills of about negative ten, I made sure to do a **Ruben Nepales** and scout out every *Pinoyorker* I could meet up with. There are quite a lot of them there, each one trying their best to "make it there," grabbing a big bite out of the Big Apple.

Supermodel **Cristina Garcia** is focused on work as super interior designer. I met her boyfriend**Pasha** and they look too cute together. **Chris Ortigas** is making her mark as a bag designer, with roommate **Bianca Monzon** designing stuff for Gap. **Mark and Stacy Brennan-Punzalan** are perfectly settled bringing in nurses to work in the state.

Enzo Lim makes the global chicks swoon as he bartends for meatpacking district hipspot 5/9, along with another *Pinoyorker* **Geoffrey**—these two Pinoy cuties represent us well (coz it's always about how beautiful the Filipinas are—but that's a given).

NYC veterans **Ronnie Alejandro** is back in Manila working on his nth book while **Thea Robles** still holds court in downtown Felix. **Banana Cruz** just gave birth to a beautiful baby while **Jerome Castillo** is happily settled in his job in NY finance. I just missed **Bea Valdes** and **Archie Rodriguez** (they went back to Manila the day I arrived) and**Rico** and **Tina Ocampo** are there to expand their Celestina bag empire. Photographer **Arlu Gomez** (he is the right hand man of **Santi D' Orazio**) has shot **Beyonce Knowles** with her famous armpit pose.

Oprah's favorite boy

I am most proud of my friend **PJ Pascual**, who is the accessories editor of Oprah magazine. He showed me the "fashion closet" a la "Devil Wears Prada" and my jaw just dropped. I even channeled my inner Oprah and sat on her desk—yes, Oprah's desk!

Christie Tan, Mary Joy De Leon and **Lucia Santiago** are making heads turn as the best representatives of Pinay beauty in the city that never sleeps. My Cebuana favorite even came out in a full page photo in the New York Post and, the night we were at Rose Bar at the Grammercy Park Hotel, no less than **Russell Simmons** went crazy trailing our lass from the south. **Nicole Hernandez** is also there, studying fashion at Parson's—I can't wait for her return. **Louelle Soong** misses her family so much and sends them all their love through this space. **Tanya Moreno** is as happy and active as ever, along with her long time boyfriend **Quad de la Paz**.

Speaking of returns, **Raffy** and **Carmina del Rosario** and their newborn **Santiago** is coming back to Manila this March, **Carlo Antonio** will be back this year as well.

Well, as for myself—yup, I am back from my vacation—nope, not from rehab, a nose job or a house raid (as false news spread when I wasn't here). There are too many Pinoys to mention—we've become a major-minority over there. Even after a month, it's just not enough. You'll always like to grab a bigger bite of the Big Apple. Yum.

BUTLER SERVICE. Vodka, bubbly or [illegible]

CURLY BELLE. From the [illegible]

VELVET MAFIA. Tim Yap and Christie Tan at the Rose Bar at Grammercy Park Hotel.

POETRY BOOK LAUNCH. Author Dinah Mejia with background artwork by Rob Bellaza.

KING OF PINOY BOOKS. Premier Pinoyorker Ronnie Alejandro.

ALL B[illegible] Banana Cruz is booty-licious.

BIGGEST male Pinoy [illegible]

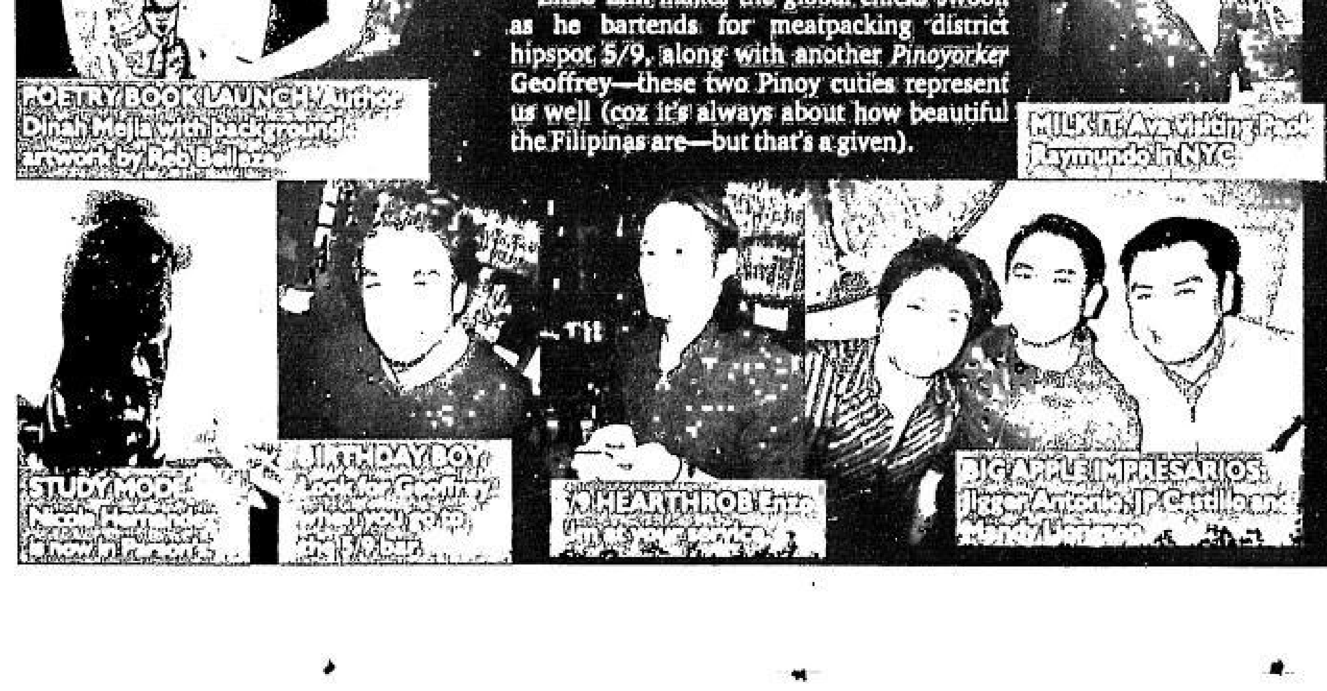
ORO! TORO! [illegible]

IBIZA IN NEW YORK. DJ Pippi at Cielo.

MILK IT. Ava visiting Pack Raymundo in NYC.

AT THE HEARST FASHION CLOSET. Yes, these devils wear Prada.

GEARED UP FOR WINTER. [illegible]



STUDY MODE. Nicole Hernandez is now in Parson's.

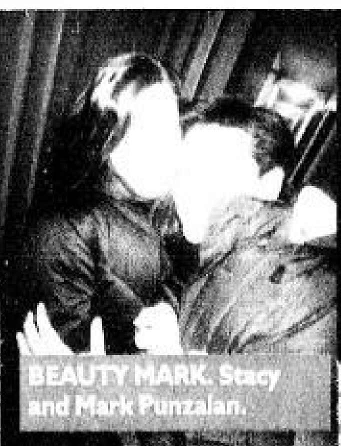
BIRTHDAY BOY. Look for Geoffrey when you go to the 5/9 bar.

5/9 HEARTHROB Enzo Lim at your service.

BIG APPLE IMPRESARIOS. Jigger Antonio, JP Castillo and [illegible]

BIG APPLES. Quad dela Paz and Tanya Moreno.

HAPPY FAMILY. Louelle Soong and Chris Ortigas.


BEAUTY MARK. Stacy and Mark Punzalan.

MISSES PHILIPPINES. Gionna Cabrera and Hannah Cruz.

ARTISAN. Filmmaking family Keith Sicat and Sa[illegible] Lluch Dalena.

COMING BACK SOON. Carmina and [illegible] del Rosario.

FURRY-TALES. Samantha Lopez and Christie Tan.

SUPERMODEL Cristina [illegible] and her man Pasha at Nobu.

COLD FRONT. Christie Tan with Tim Yap.

DINNER DATE. Carlo Antonio with his gorgeous girlfriend [illegible]

CRISTINA Garcia and Thea Robles.

TWICE THE FUN. Mardi Valdes and Bianca Monzon

[illegible] Club owner Francois with Christie Tan.

SALIVATING over silicone

Win Back the World Record at CloseUp Lovapalooza 2007

February 10, 2007 marks the day the Philippines challenges Hungary to win back the World Record for "The Most Number of Couples Kissing Simultaneously". Couples, both young and young-at-heart, all gather to either discover or re-affirm the love they have for each other. Whatever their stories are, they have one thing in common: the chance to be part of a Guinness World Record through a kiss.

At the North Open Lot of SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City, lovebirds ages 18 and up from all over the country will gather for the country's biggest and most romantic kissing festival—CloseUp Lovapalooza 2007.

Registrants will be asked to fill up the CloseUp Lovapalooza Registration Form available at CloseUp Lovapalooza School and Mall Tours, Print Ads, at SM Mall of Asia North Parking Lot (near IMAX) and Music Hall (both walking distance). Couples with completed registration forms can proceed to the Kissing Pit Gates to get their couple numbers. Couples that have pre-registered through SMART should present their assigned Couple Number at the special SMART VIP entrance on the day of Lovapalooza to get their Lovapalooza sticker. Only couples that have the Lovapalooza sticker or who surrender a completed registration form will be allowed entry into the Kissing Pit.

To make sure that everyone enjoys the safe and wholesome fun at CloseUp Lovapalooza, the organizers have a few helpful suggestions:

Everybody is encouraged to wear red shirts and comfortable shoes.

All participants are strongly advised to leave their expensive timepieces and jewelry at home.

Food and other activity booths are available within the venue for your convenience.

Backpacks, big bags, firearms and sharp objects are not allowed inside the kissing pit.

Gates of the Kissing Pit open at precisely 5pm. Program starts at 6pm. Those who arrive before 4pm are advised to park at the multilevel parking on both sides of the SM Mall of Asia Main Building. Those coming after 4pm may park in the designated parking areas outside the mall, along Harbor Drive and Pacific Drive .

To ensure that things go smoothly during this momentous occasion, the organizers have arranged for the presence of NCRPO police officers, 70 traffic officers, 30 safety units, 20 rescue officers, 10 representatives from the Pasay City Tourism, 10 aides from the Pasay General Hospital, 41 MMDA officers, 100 Regional Special Action Unit (RSAU), 300 bouncers, 9 K-9 units from Pasay City Police, 50 PNP officers, a number of security people from the SM Mall of Asia, and a group of roving police and on-foot patrol from Pasay City Police.

SM Mall of Asia has also released the following traffic advise for everyone's convenience:

Ocean Drive corner Sunset Drive will be closed due to an on-going construction.

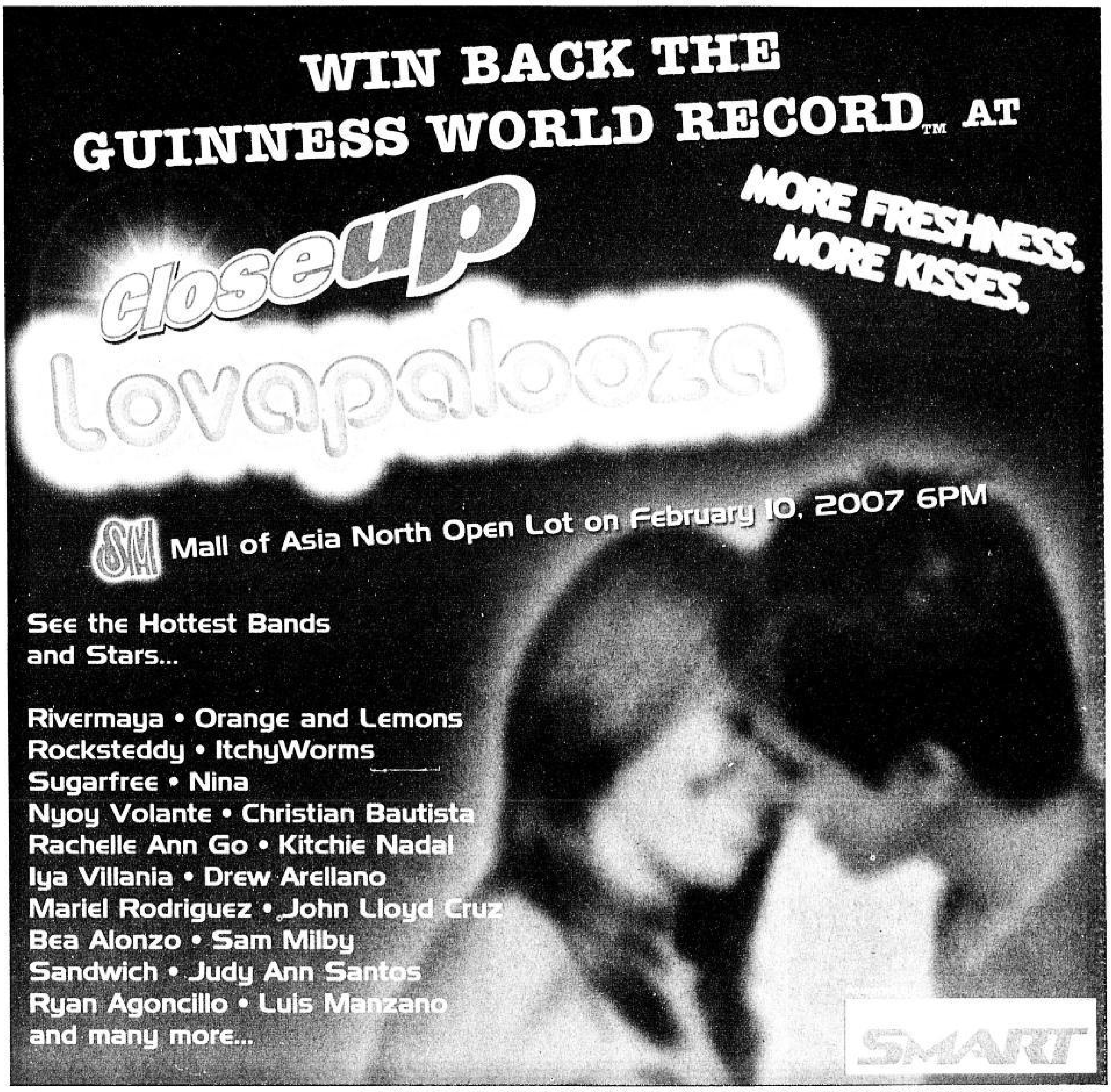
Seaside Boulevard and Coral Way will be blocked after 10pm to ensure the safety of the participating Lovapalooza couples.

Take part in the country's biggest Valentine party and see the hottest bands and pop acts like Rocksteddy, Itchyworms, Orange and Lemons, Sugarfree, Sandwich, Kitchie Nadal and Rivermaya. Let the likes of Nina, Nyoy Volante, Paolo Santos, Philippine Idol Finalist Jan Kurt Nieto, Rachelle Anne Go and Christian Bautista serenade you. Get star-struck with the crème de la crème of the country's entertainment industry --Judy Ann Santos, Ryan Agoncillo, Luis Manzano, Mariel Rodriguez, Iya Villania, Drew Arellano, John Lloyd Cruz, Bea Alonzo, Sam Milby and many more!

It's bound to be a memorable night with the all the jaw-dropping fireworks and the reveal of the winner of the "Love by the Bay" photo contest. Get tons of opportunities to win special prizes during the program. But most importantly, experience the thrill and romance of a midnight kiss as you take part in breaking a World Record.

This is a truly unforgettable evening so make sure you've got the confidence to break the World Record! Bring your special someone to CloseUp Lovapalooza and brace yourself for a truly magical night. And don't forget to make that kiss extra sweet by brushing with CloseUp with germ-fighting CloseUp for More Freshness, More Kisses.

ADVT


WIN BACK THE GUINNESS WORLD RECORD™ AT

closeup Lovapalooza

MORE FRESHNESS. MORE KISSES.

SM Mall of Asia North Open Lot on February 10, 2007 6PM

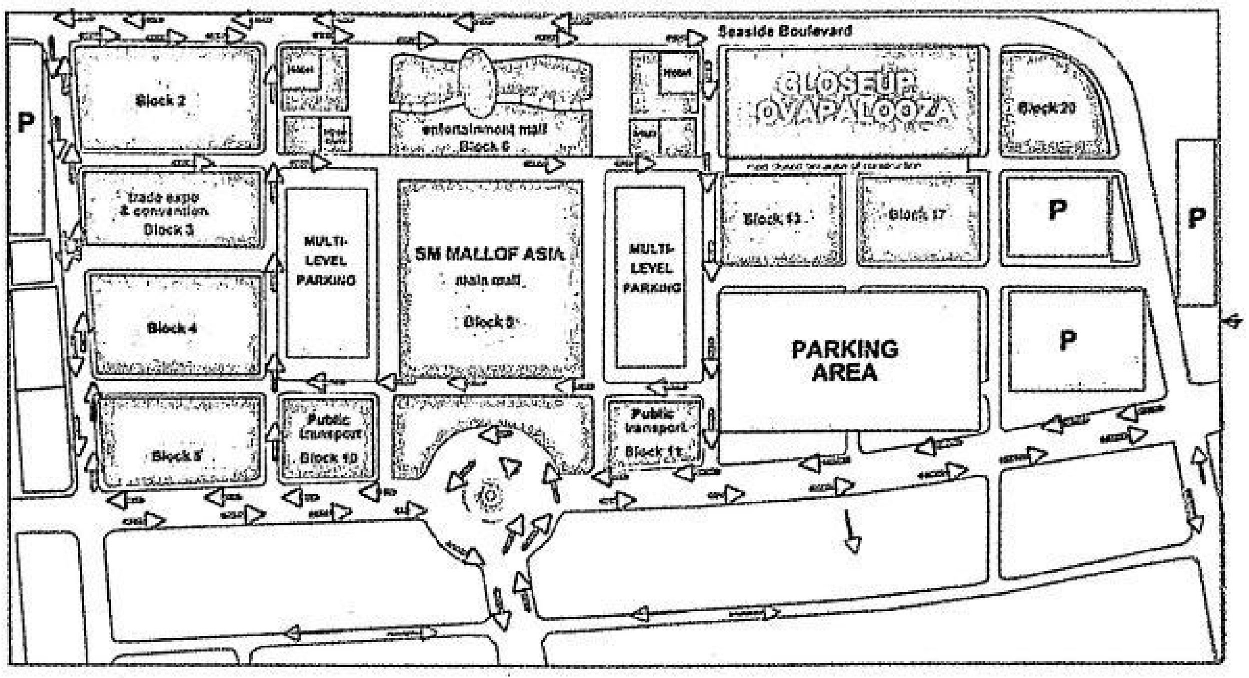
See the Hottest Bands and Stars...

Rivermaya • Orange and Lemons
Rocksteddy • ItchyWorms
Sugarfree • Nina
Nyoy Volante • Christian Bautista
Rachelle Ann Go • Kitchie Nadal
Iya Villania • Drew Arellano
Mariel Rodriguez • John Lloyd Cruz
Bea Alonzo • Sam Milby
Sandwich • Judy Ann Santos
Ryan Agoncillo • Luis Manzano
and many more...

SMART

TRAFFIC ADVISORY

FEBRUARY 10, 2007
SM MALL OF ASIA,
PASAY CITY



MALE
Name
Age
(only 18 yrs. old and above are allowed)
Address
Mobile
Email

Waiver: My signature below indicates that the above information is true and correct and I will participate in the attempt to break the Guinness World Record™ of the Most Number of Couples Kissing Simultaneously with my partner on this registration form.

Signature

FEMALE
Name
Age
(only 18 yrs. old and above are allowed)
Address
Mobile
Email

Waiver: My signature below indicates that the above information is true and correct and I will participate in the attempt to break the Guinness World Record™ of the Most Number of Couples Kissing Simultaneously with my partner on this registration form.

Signature

pls. submit this form at the entrance of the kissing pit

Guidelines to Kiss at Midnight:
1. Get ready to win back the record at CloseUp Lovapalooza on Feb.10, 2007 at SM Mall of Asia North Open Lot, Pasay City. Invite your friends and colleagues, together with their partners!
2. Make sure you have CloseUp Fresh Breath and get ready to kiss at midnight. CloseUp Brush Booths are available at the Kissing Pit.
3. At 11.59.50 of February 10, there will be a countdown to kiss. Couples should be standing up during the attempt.
4. Kiss at the strike of midnight for 10 seconds. There will be an official count to ensure that the kiss lasts the full 10 seconds. The end of the 10-second kiss will be announced by the program hosts.
5. Get ready to celebrate your part in breaking the record!

Lovapalooza

GET READY TO WIN BACK THE RECORD

On-site registration begins at 1:00PM.
Wear RED to enter the Kissing Pit.
Kissing couples should be 18 years and above.
Backpacks and big bags will not be allowed entry inside the Kissing Pit.

Do you want to pre-register as a CloseUp Lovapalooza Kissing Couple?

Text Yes to 8398 FREE of Charge and get additional info on CloseUp Lovapalooza

You also get 5 free SMS when you pre-register.*
***For Smart Prepaid Subscribers Only.**
***5 Free SMS Credited upon initial subscription to service.**
***5 Free SMS valid for 24 hours.**

Relationshipwrecked

Ladies, here are 7 things you can say (or do) to your special dude to sabotage Valentine's Day

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS. LIKE SUDOKU, they can be notoriously cryptic and totally difficult to understand. As a rule, they assume all guys are mind-readers who can instantly presto change-o a faint sigh into "Could you carry my purse?" or a knowing purr into "OMG, let's watch 'The Gilmore Girls' instead of 'Heroes'!" (And let's not even get into "Does this make me look fat?" or anything that neighbors it on the rhetorical question Venn diagram.) Can't—gasp!—breathe.

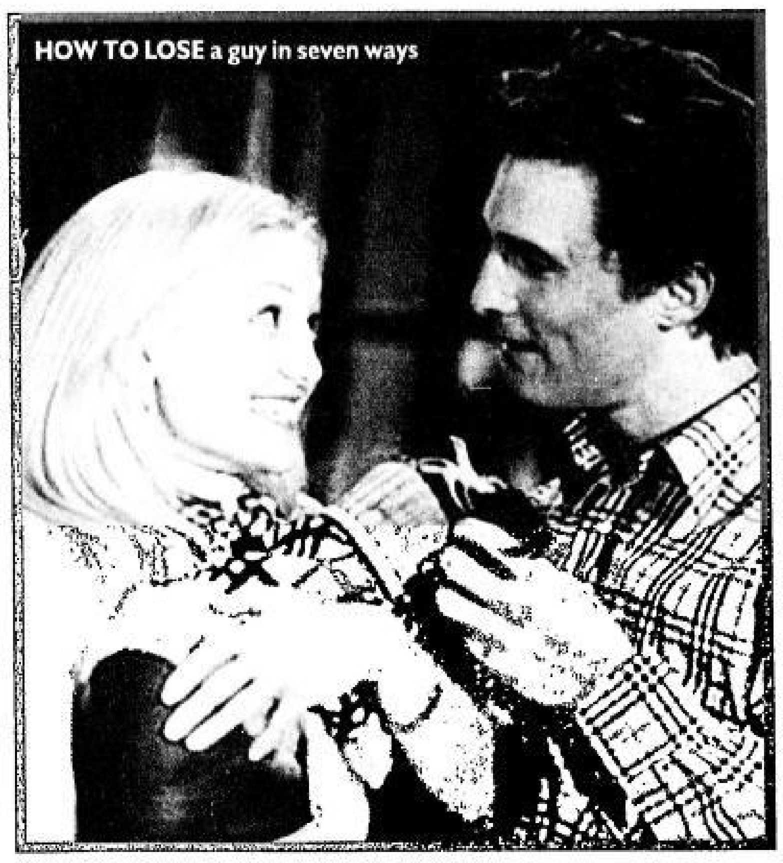
But after being subjected to the endearing neuroses (and endless makeovers) of sweet-smelling Girl World, dudes of the young and clueless sort turn from slob jobs into menchildren with less unruly nose hair and a new pair of flat-front pants. Ah, romance on auto pilot. What a dream. *Sorta.*

Potential kryptonite

Everything goes swimmingly (at least according to the guy's POV) until the girl's *sudoku-ness* rears its emo head once again (according to the guy's POV, naturally), resulting in a loopy half-fight. A hologram of that scenario would look like this: Dude asks chick what she wants to do. Chick says she doesn't care. Dude plays with his XBox. Chick sulks and says he is an "insensitive ass." Dude asks why. Chick says dude should already know, then cues a superfreakout. It's relationship sudoku! (P.S.: More on the XBox later.)

See, more often than not, girls think the words "marriage," "commitment," or "I missed my period" are the only ones that send chills down our spines/doughy torsos. What they don't know is that everything they say sends chills down our spines/doughy torsos. Or tends to, depending on the tide or what we "forgot" to do this time.

Of course, there are clear stand-outs among those strung-together nuggets of verbal kryptonite. In the spirit of Cupid's chronic stupidity and **Kate Hudson** rom-coms that have reached the nirvana of public acclaim (and loosely inspired what you are about to read), here are seven things that the ladies can say (or do) to drive their special dude away in time for V-Day. Could they be the new love-buzzkill flashcards? Possibly. Fellas, you have been appropriately warned.



HOW TO LOSE a guy in seven ways

The relationshipwreckers

1. "I already named our kids."

As bored and possibly horny mouse potatoes, the two of you probably met while producing/enhancing your identities online. You also probably achieved coupledom after a few hot and steamy instant messages, gooey comments on each other's blogs, or a mere series of dexterous keystrokes.

Yet the lightning pace of today's digital democracy is neither a signal nor a reason for your little lady to begin christening your imaginary offspring a few hours/days/weeks into your mackfest. Though wrong, this declaration is only mildly creepy compared to the ones that follow. However, it should already sound the potential-psycho alarm. If you stay together longer than K-Fed's ticking fifteen minutes, she will continue this penchant for naming, like, stuff, as you will later find out.

2. "I want a 3-carat princess-cut pink diamond ring."

A snappy response to that would be: "Wait, let me text my dad, the Sultan of Brunei." That is longhand for "Not."

Inasmuch as girlfriends want to be treated like princesses, boyfriends—no matter how dedicated or loaded—can only do it so much. (By "so much," it means "in spirit.") After all, there's nothing more annoying than a chick who sees you as **Donald Trump**/an ATM. To quote **Kanye West**, "I ain't saying she a gold digger, but she ain't messing with no broke broke." Amen.

3. "Either your XBox goes or I go."

Circling back to what I said earlier, certain females have a propensity for presenting impossible (and unfair) either/or situations to their significant others. The noun "XBox" is just one example. By all means, dudes have filled that blank with any/all of these other variables: "guy friends," "porn stash," "amazing beer gut," *blah blah blah*.

If the dude has anything resembling a pair of low-dangling cherries, this particular episode often ends with him clutching the beloved gaming console (or whatever), and the girl weeping inconsolably while storming out of the room in a hailstorm of F words. Your girl may think you're getting back at her for giving an enthusiastic thumbs-down to your dreams of owning a high-class call-girl operation when you grow up, but assure her it's not the case. You just need to *XBoxercise*. Or something to that effect.

4. "Schmoopy."

Blame that classic "Seinfeld" episode for unleashing that term of endearment on to our collective consciousness. "Schmoopy" may merely be the first of many bloodcurdling pet names in the known universe, but it captures the sound of many people gagging at once. Don't worry, be sappy? Gross.

5. "I wanna name him Princess Sophia."

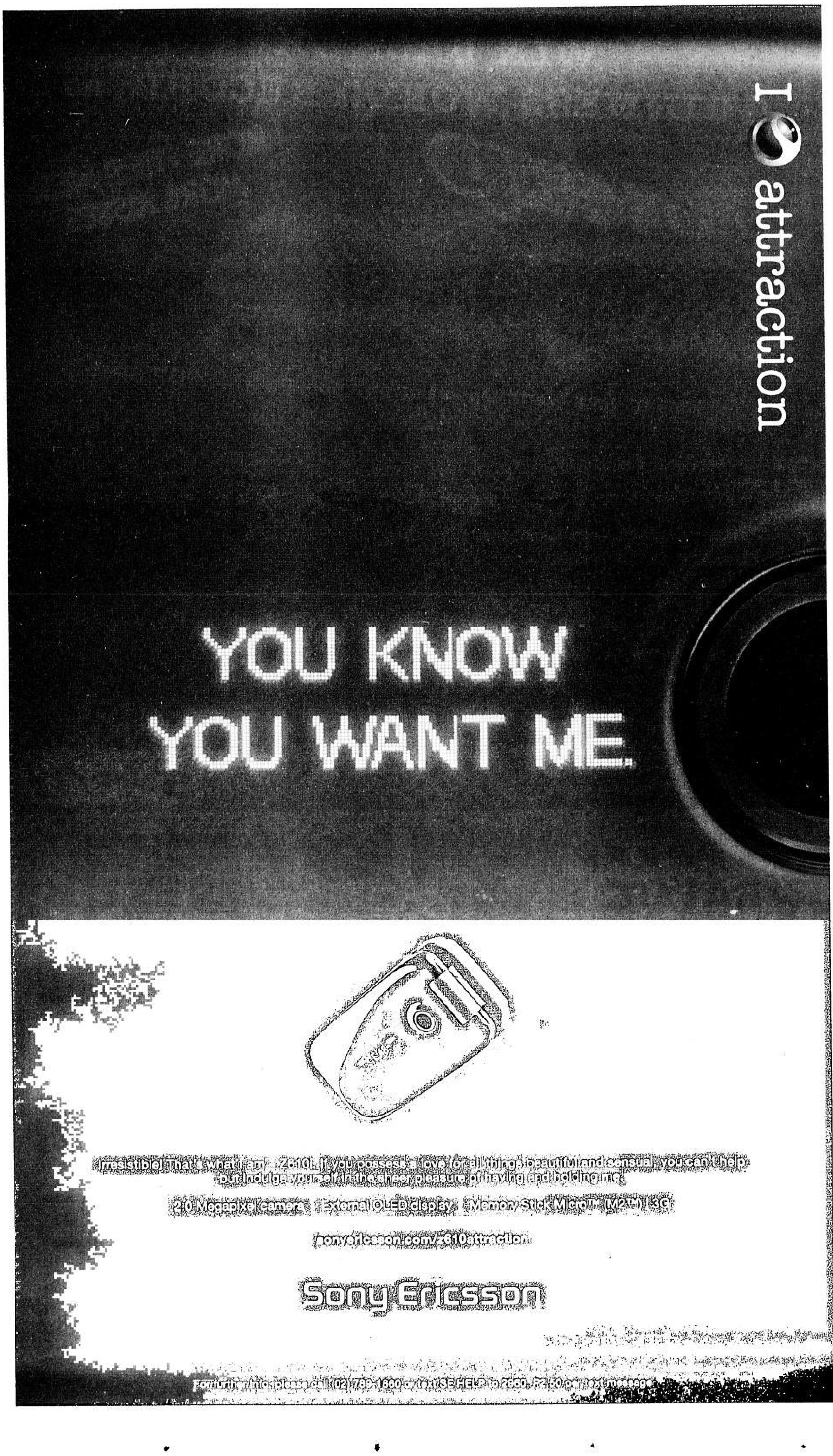
And she doesn't mean your pet dog. Though touching, a chick naming a guy's member—the thinking part of every man's being—something so *frou-frou* and *la-di-da* is emasculating, if **Matthew McConaughey** in "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" is to be believed and paraphrased. How would a girl like that feel if her, *uhm*, girlie part was dubbed The Bat Cave? Needless to say, it's a turn-off. Next!

6. "Is herpes, like, contagious?"

Not so long ago, a hickey was the biological merit badge for making out. Now, thanks to *celebutard* **Paris Hilton**, it's herpes. No one wants a town bicycle for a girlfriend, so if you guys hear this—or anything resembling it—don't, like, ride that bike and run the other direction. (For a totally funny take on this totally unfunny question, check out "Syphilis Girl," MadTV's parody of **Nelly Furtado**'s "Promiscuous Girl," on YouTube. Good times.)

7. "My schlong is bigger than yours."

Not to player-hate from the sidelines, but girls who say this are not girls. Or at least they're not 100% of that species. Whether it's a practical joke or a serious diss, this statement is the perfect send-off in this run up to V-Day. As the synopsis of your young and possibly short-lived love/hate fairy tale, it effectively and arrogantly declares, "Once upon a time, the end." Happy Valentine's!



Irresistible! That's what I am — Z610. If you possess a love for all things beautiful and sensual, you can't help but indulge yourself in the sheer pleasure of having and holding me.

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SUPER SELECTIONS

Of Songs, Stars and Squid

By Tals Diaz

So you want to be Super! and prove to your Valentine that you don't have the imagination of a paper cup. Take it from our alternative hearts and check out other things you can give other than flowers and chocolate

OF SONGS/ D3

DUNKIN' DONUTS

Dunkin' Darling Donuts

Three yummy heart-shaped donuts in a lovely triangular box for P29.50

Available from February 01 to 18, 2007

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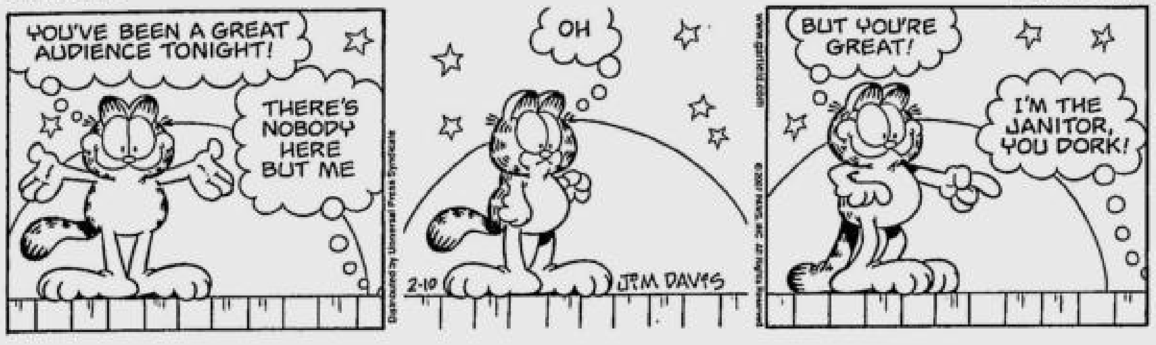
- Via THE MALL: I-access ang The Mall sa SIM at sundin ang path na ito–
  The Mall>Mall Assistant>My Account>Prepaid>Buy CTU>CTU1

Note: Siguraduhing may P25 Regular Load ang iyong account para maka-convert to 24/7 Call & Text Unlimited 1 Day.

SUN CELLULAR PREPAID

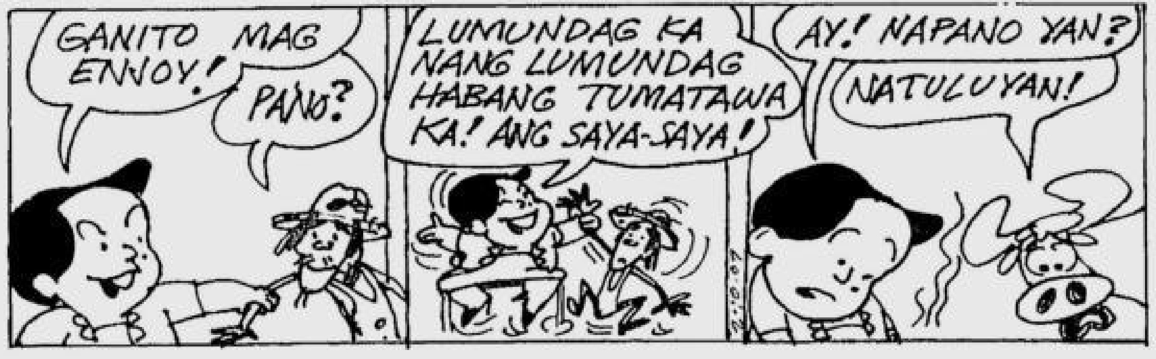
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


YOU'VE BEEN A GREAT AUDIENCE TONIGHT!
THERE'S NOBODY HERE BUT ME
OH
BUT YOU'RE GREAT!
I'M THE JANITOR, YOU DORK!
2-10 JIM DAVIS

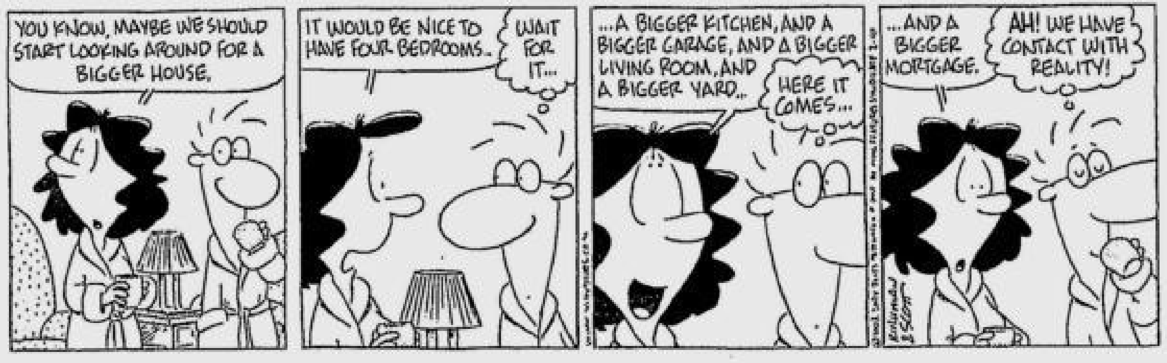
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


GANITO MAG ENJOY!
PANO?
LUMUNDAG KA NANG LUMUNDAG HABANG TUMATAWA KA! ANG SAYA-SAYA!
AY! NAPANO YAN?
NATULUYAN!

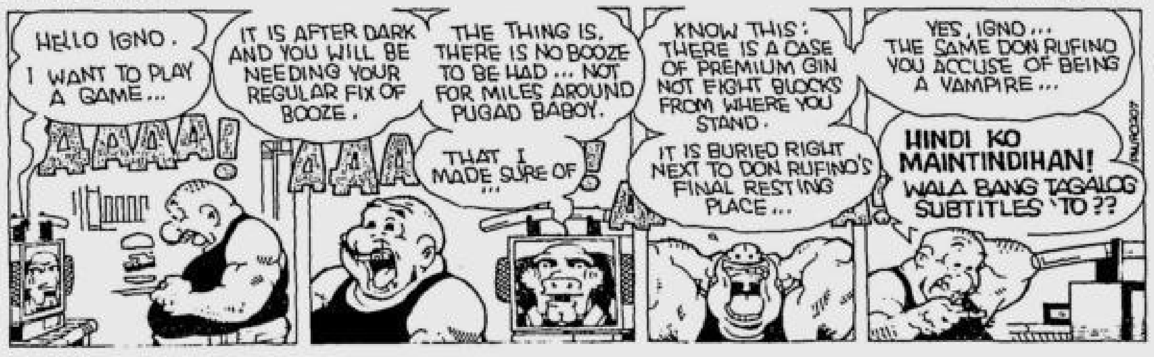
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOU KNOW, MAYBE WE SHOULD START LOOKING AROUND FOR A BIGGER HOUSE.
IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE FOUR BEDROOMS...
WAIT FOR IT...
...A BIGGER KITCHEN, AND A BIGGER GARAGE, AND A BIGGER LIVING ROOM, AND A BIGGER YARD...
HERE IT COMES...
...AND A BIGGER MORTGAGE.
AH! WE HAVE CONTACT WITH REALITY!

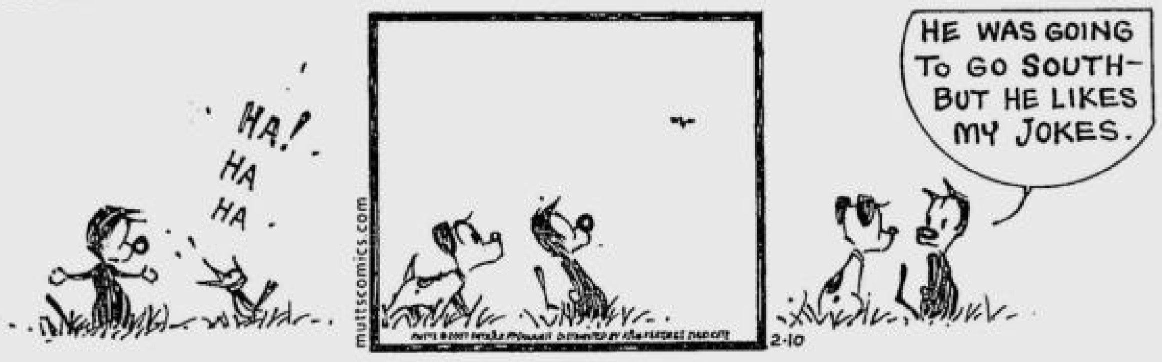
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HELLO IGNO. I WANT TO PLAY A GAME...
AAAAA!
IT IS AFTER DARK AND YOU WILL BE NEEDING YOUR REGULAR FIX OF BOOZE.
THE THING IS, THERE IS NO BOOZE TO BE HAD... NOT FOR MILES AROUND PUGAD BABOY.
THAT I MADE SURE OF...
AAA
KNOW THIS: THERE IS A CASE OF PREMIUM GIN NOT EIGHT BLOCKS FROM WHERE YOU STAND.
IT IS BURIED RIGHT NEXT TO DON RUFINO'S FINAL RESTING PLACE...
YES, IGNO... THE SAME DON RUFINO YOU ACCUSE OF BEING A VAMPIRE...
HINDI KO MAINTINDIHAN! WALA BANG TAGALOG SUBTITLES 'TO??

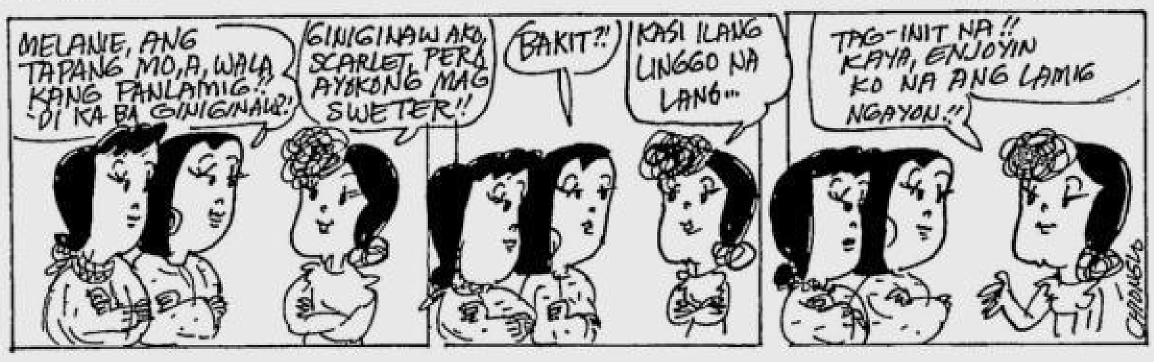
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HA! HA HA
HE WAS GOING TO GO SOUTH– BUT HE LIKES MY JOKES.
muttscomics.com
2-10

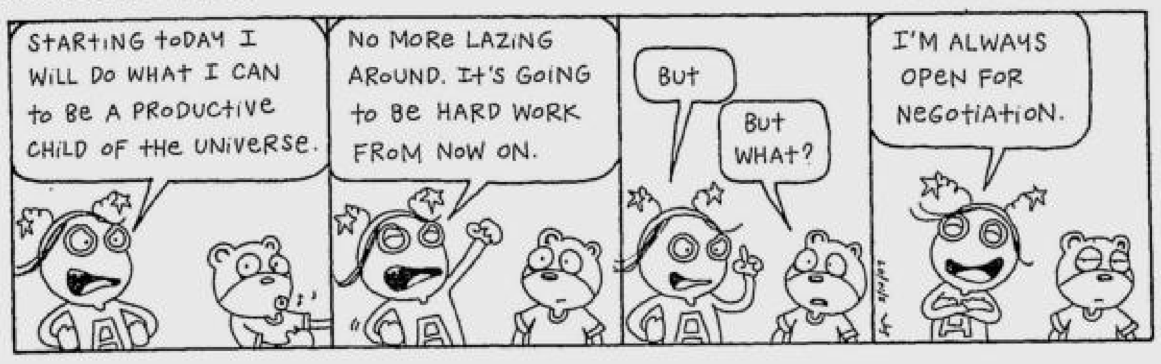
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MELANIE, ANG TAPANG MO, A, WALA KANG PANLAMIG!! 'DI KA BA GINIGINAW?!
GINIGINAW AKO, SCARLET, PERO AYOKONG MAG SWETER!!
BAKIT?!
KASI ILANG LINGGO NA LANG...
TAG-INIT NA!! KAYA, ENJOYIN KO NA ANG LAMIG NGAYON!!
CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

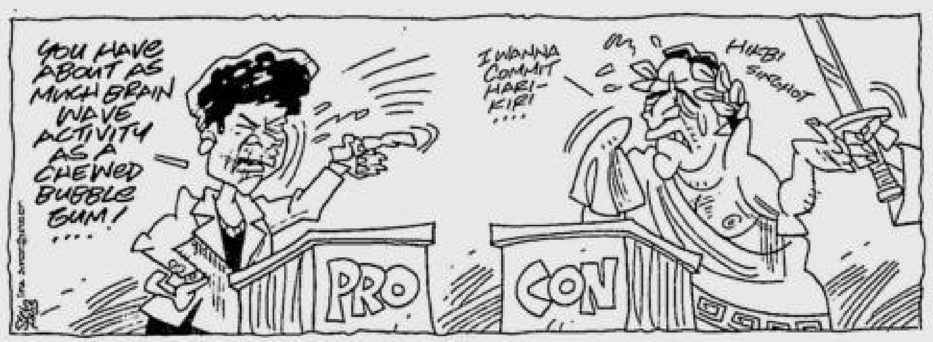
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


STARTING TODAY I WILL DO WHAT I CAN TO BE A PRODUCTIVE CHILD OF THE UNIVERSE.
NO MORE LAZING AROUND. IT'S GOING TO BE HARD WORK FROM NOW ON.
BUT
BUT WHAT?
I'M ALWAYS OPEN FOR NEGOTIATION.

DIVINE COMEDY

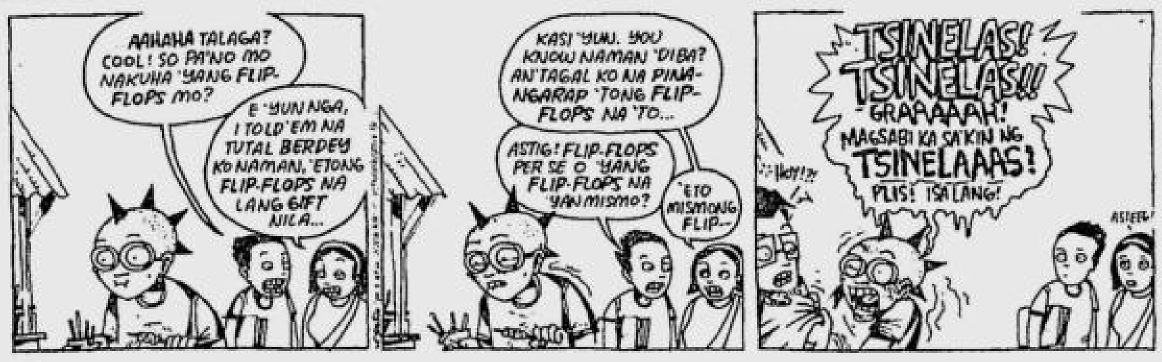
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

HUWAG NA HUWAG PUMASOK SA ISANG THEOLOGICAL DEBATE KUNG ANG MAKAKALABAN MO AY SI MIRIAM DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO DAHIL TIYAK NA ILALAMPASO KA NYA KAHIT NA ANG PANGALAN MO PA AY SI CICERO


YOU HAVE ABOUT AS MUCH BRAIN WAVE ACTIVITY AS A CHEWED BUBBLE GUM!....
I WANNA COMMIT HARI-KIRI....
HIKBI
SINGHOT
PRO
CON

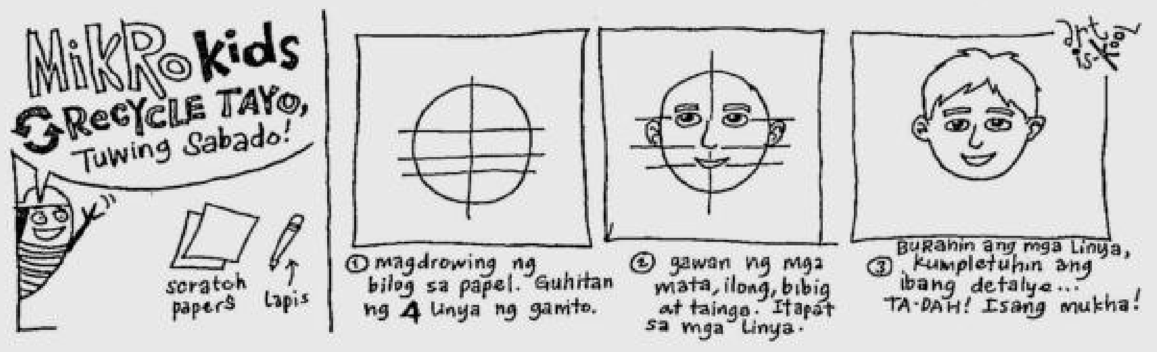
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AAHAHA TALAGA? COOL! SO PA'NO MO NAKUHA 'YANG FLIP-FLOPS MO?
E 'YUN NGA, I TOLD 'EM NA TUTAL BERDEY KO NAMAN, 'ETONG FLIP-FLOPS NA LANG GIFT NILA...
KASI 'YUN. YOU KNOW NAMAN 'DIBA? AN'TAGAL KO NA PINANGARAP 'TONG FLIP-FLOPS NA 'TO...
ASTIG! FLIP-FLOPS PER SE O 'YANG FLIP-FLOPS NA 'YAN MISMO?
'ETO MISMONG FLIP–
TSINELAS! TSINELAS!!! GRAAAAAH! MAGSABI KA SA'KIN NG TSINELAAAS! PLIS! ISA LANG!
HOY!?!
ASTEG!

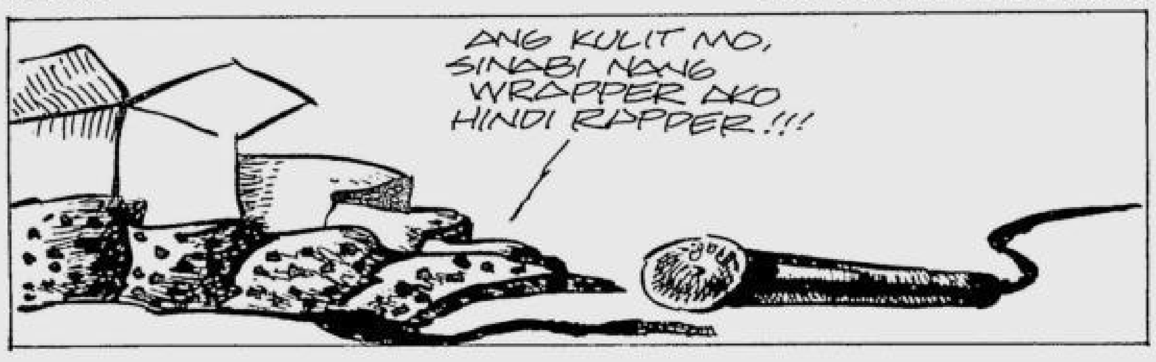
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRo kids
RECYCLE TAYO, Tuwing Sabado!
scratch papers
lapis
① magdrowing ng bilog sa papel. Guhitan ng 4 linya ng ganito.
② gawan ng mga mata, ilong, bibig at tainga. Itapat sa mga linya.
③ Burahin ang mga linya, kumpletuhin ang ibang detalye... TA-DAH! Isang mukha!
Art is Kool

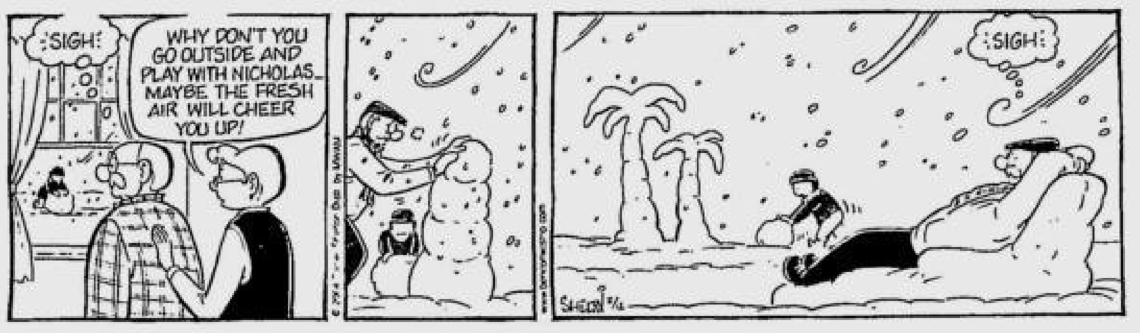
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ANG KULIT MO, SINABI NANG WRAPPER AKO HINDI RAPPER!!!

BEN

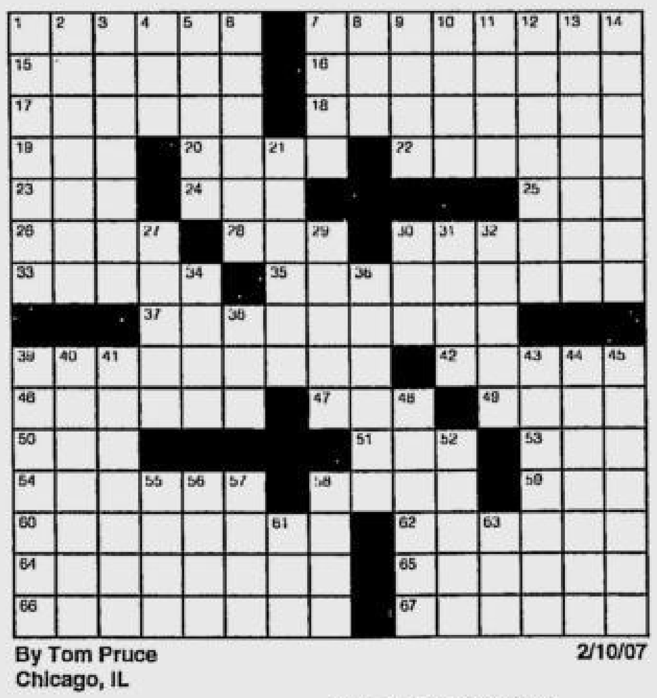
BY DANIEL SHELTON


SIGH
WHY DON'T YOU GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY WITH NICHOLAS... MAYBE THE FRESH AIR WILL CHEER YOU UP!
SIGH

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Habitual practice
7 Excessively preoccupied person
15 5th-century leader
16 Ocean view
17 Blend beforehand
18 Bowed low
19 Set afire
20 Travel document
22 Surgical line
23 Ernie of the PGA
24 Outback nester
25 Charles or Bradbury
26 Bank opening
28 High mount
30 Landed manor
33 U-boat detector
35 Tom's antics?
37 Available cash
39 Verbal exchange
42 Waters (down)
46 "__ Fideles"
47 Close down
49 World's longest river
50 Sea to Debussy
51 Get off one's feet
53 Trail behind
54 Shawl in Sonora
58 Goose egg
59 Darby or Novak
60 Get too thin
62 Weasel cousin
64 Ponderer's phrase
65 Swerve wildly
66 Lip curlers
67 Eager desire

DOWN
1 Lacking a lid
2 French street-scenes painter
3 University in Deland, FL
4 Conway or Curry
5 Yellowish green
6 Nissan model
7 Peak in Thessaly
8 Arthur or Lillie
9 Bando and Mineo
10 Jacob's twin
11 Jazz singer's talent
12 Japanese warrior
13 Drive
14 Late night flights
21 Gunpowder ingredient
27 Soft powders
29 Stability
30 Yale alum
31 Adam's son
32 Author of "The Other"
34 Profusion
36 Danish port
38 Can. province
39 Maidens
40 Think-tank members
41 Jag the edge of
43 More lustrous
44 Stritch and May
45 Differentiated subdivision
48 Straightforward
52 Genesis to Deuteronomy
55 Wile E. Coyote's supplier
56 Marina structure
57 Facilitate
58 Dizzy twosome?
61 Part of Canada's Y.T.
63 Open-scan med. procedure



By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL
2/10/07

Friday's Puzzle Solved

A	G	A	P	E	■	T	W	I	G	■	T	O	T	E
C	R	A	I	G	■	R	E	N	O	■	S	L	I	D
H	E	R	E	G	O	E	S	N	O	T	H	I	N	G
E	C	O	■	B	R	E	T	■	D	A	I	N	T	Y
D	O	N	K	E	Y	S	■	O	D	O	R	■	■	■
■	■	■	L	A	X	■	D	U	E	■	T	H	O	R
S	N	O	U	T	■	M	E	T	A	L	■	A	D	E
L	E	T	M	E	H	A	N	D	L	E	T	H	I	S
A	R	T	■	R	A	D	I	O	■	M	E	A	N	T
B	O	O	T	■	L	A	M	■	B	O	A	■	■	■
■	■	■	R	A	F	T	■	T	A	N	K	T	O	P
A	S	S	I	S	T	■	B	E	E	S	■	W	B	A
W	A	T	C	H	I	L	L	P	R	O	V	E	I	T
E	R	I	K	■	M	A	U	I	■	D	I	E	T	S
S	I	R	S	■	E	Y	E	D	■	A	N	T	S	Y

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2/10/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Because you're highly individualistic, you invariably make a memorable impression on others. Furthermore, you want their endorsement and their acceptance. Although sometimes emotionally reserved yourself, you're able to trigger strong emotions in others. Because of these qualities, you are very "other" oriented. An important choice will arise this year. (Remember: Not to decide is to decide.) Choose wisely.

Birthdate of: Ross Powers, champion snowboarder; Greg Norman, professional golfer; Leontyne Price, singer

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be tolerant of an older friend who might be critical of you today. Or perhaps this is someone who just wants to rain on your parade. Just ignore it. (You need this like a fish needs a bicycle.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Authority figures easily are critical of you today. Don't even go there. Avoid important discussions with parents or bosses. (These talks would only discourage you, anyway.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Travel plans or matters connected with education might get set back today. Something related to these areas might be canceled or delayed. Just work with this

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a poor day to ask anyone for a loan. Likewise, it's a poor day to make demands of others. When you need help from people, choose your timing carefully.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Discussions with partners and close friends might discourage you today. Someone could be critical. (You hate criticism!) Just let this pass; it's short-lived. (Whew!)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Don't be discouraged by matters at work that are delayed or stalled in the water. It might be difficult to get the authorization you need today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Romance is in the toilet today. Lovers are easily critical of each other. (Of course, the road of true anything never runs smoothly.) This, too, shall pass.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Be extra-patient with family members today, especially parents or older relatives. (Old age is not for sissies.) People are easily discouraged today. No big deal.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might be inclined to worry too much today. This is not good. You are the one sign where activity and optimism are critical to your survival!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Don't take your money worries too seriously today. Everyone feels a bit glum about something right now. (It's always darkest before it gets pitch black.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Don't overreact if partners are critical or discouraging today. Practically everyone feels this way today. Therefore, don't take it personally.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Feelings of self-doubt might make you anxious today. Pay no attention to these thoughts in your mind. Each and every one of us doubt ourselves at times—for what purpose? Just relax.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

						4	1	
					2	8		
	2			8	5			
9	8							
7								6
							4	3
			1	9			3	
		6	5					
	5	2						

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/10

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

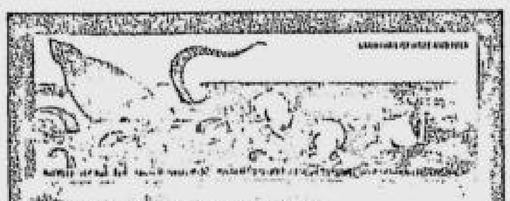
Answer to previous puzzle

5	9	4	6	1	3	7	2	8
1	8	7	2	5	9	6	4	3
3	6	2	8	4	7	1	5	9
9	1	8	7	2	5	3	6	4
2	5	6	4	3	8	9	7	1
4	7	3	1	9	6	2	8	5
7	3	9	5	8	2	4	1	6
6	4	5	3	7	1	8	9	2
8	2	1	9	6	4	5	3	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★

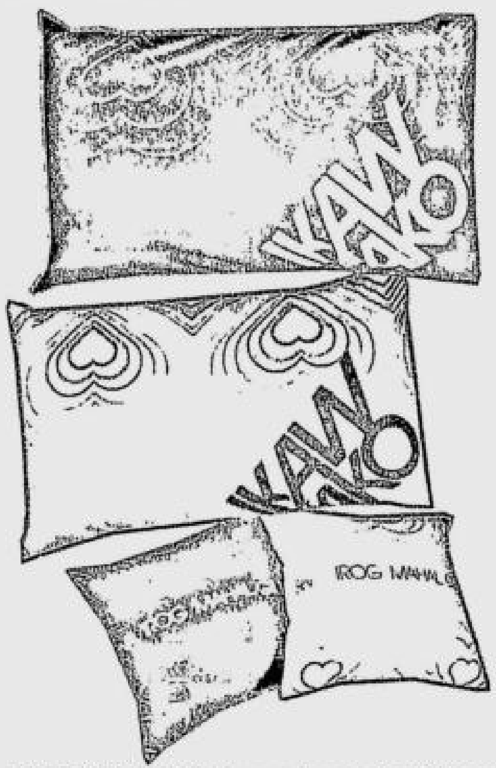
Of Songs . . .

From page D1

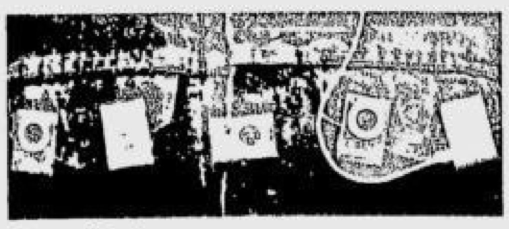


Straight from the Art

Here's an idea for a romantic date with a twist — why not take your significant other to see a giant squid perform alongside a synchronized swim team! These, along with select odd sketches, comprise the collection of "Drawings of Hope and Fear" by Pepper Roxas, the distinguished illustrator and certified [illegible]. [illegible] collection is, quoting Edgar Allan Poe, "a play of hope and fears." These visions were born out of varied interests and anxieties. The special exhibit runs from Feb. 10 to 28 at the Store for All Seasons, Shaw Boulevard, on the Mandaluyong side of Edsa. (If you're coming from Makati, take a U-turn at the slot right at the intersection of Shaw and Edsa, since there is no left turn at Edsa.) For more info, click on www.studioroxas.com

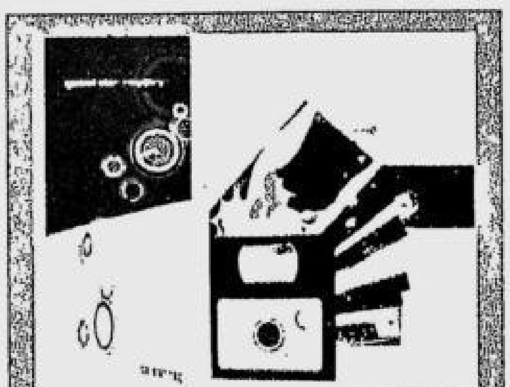


DREAM MANILA. Hug and snuggle with your loved ones in bed with these Team Manila limited edition Valentine's pillow covers!



iLove iPod

Love is random. Life is random. What better way to put some order into that chaotic equation than with an iPod Shuffle, that now comes in electric bright new colors that look so good you could eat them! The small, sleek wonder was voted as one of the best tech gadgets on the go of the year by design bible Wallpaper magazine. Here's a Cupid tip: pre-load a playlist in the Shuffle with your significant other's favorite tunes. Who's the player now?!

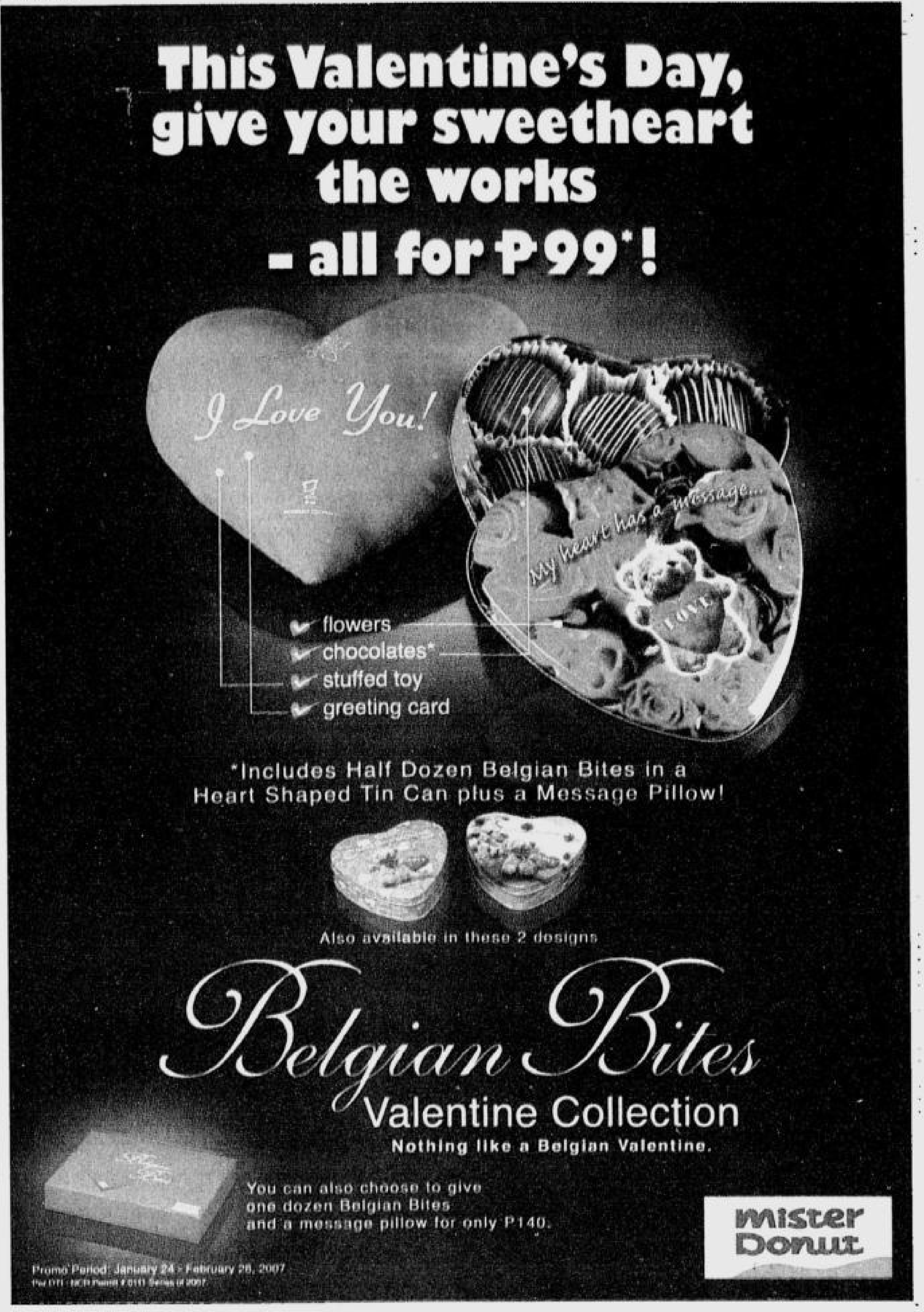


Star-crossed Lovers

Now you can really promise to give the stars! That's because you can actually immortalize someone's name among the gazillion stars in the sky. It all comes with the Star Kit Zodiac Sign from Global Star Registry, complete with a signed and sealed official certificate confirming the dedicated name and astronomical coordinates of your very own star. You also get a sky map that helps you locate your star in the sky and provides you with unique perspective to its surroundings. Get it online at www.[illegible]. The star search is on.

But if you really wanna give flowers ...

IN NEED of assorted colored Roses? Tulips? Or any kind of flowers? Make sure you give your special someone their botanical needs! Call Ana Martha at 0918-8906757 for orders and special requests!



This Valentine's Day, give your sweetheart the works - all for ₱99*!

I Love You!
My heart has a message...
LOVE

- flowers
- chocolates*
- stuffed toy
- greeting card

*Includes Half Dozen Belgian Bites in a Heart Shaped Tin Can plus a Message Pillow!

Also available in these 2 designs

Belgian Bites
Valentine Collection
Nothing like a Belgian Valentine.

You can also choose to give one dozen Belgian Bites and a message pillow for only P140.

mister Donut

Promo Period: January 24 - February 28, 2007
Per DTI - NCR Permit # 0111 Series of 2007

IN THE MOOD FOR
Love
AND
Luck
AT THE SHANG!

Catch the fun-filled double celebration of treats and surprises as a fitting toast to Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year!

New Year Oriental Bang!
Chinese Food and Curio Festival
February 7 to 21
Level 1, in front of Crossings
Mall hours

Take your pick from lucky fruits and lucky charms to welcome the Chinese New Year!

Double Treats at the Shang!
F & B Promo
February 9 to 18
Mall hours

Mall-wide food and beverage promo featuring freebies/premium items/special set menu from Claw Daddy, Cravings, C2, Dome Cafe, Figaro, Fish & Co., Green Tomato, Mrs. Fields Cafe, Sumosam, Trattoria Gourmet and Penang Hill
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-0101, Series of 2007

New Year Feng Shui Reading by Professor Charlie Chao
February 10 & 11
Level 3, in front of Figaro
1:30pm to 6pm

Present an accumulated or single receipt, single-day purchase worth ₱2,500 from any store to avail of FREE Feng Shui Reading
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-0100, Series of 2007

Chinese Arts & Crafts for Kids
February 10
Level 4, Art Plaza
2pm

Crystal lamination for kids aged 5 to12

Chinese Cultural Performances
Chinese Traditional and Modern Music
by Kim Hwa Chinese Ensemble
February 10
Level 2, Grand Atrium
7pm to 7:30pm

Chinese Cultural Dances
by Yi Shian Folk Ballet Company
February 10
Level 2, Grand Atrium
7:30pm to 8pm

New Year Dragon and Lion Dance and Martial Arts exhibition by the Philippine Ling Nam Athletic Federation
February 11
Level 2, Grand Atrium
1:30pm

Orientalia Exhibit
February 12 to 18
Level 4, Shaw Boulevard Exhibit Area
Mall hours

An exhibit of oriental items like furniture, paintings, fabrics and decor from Bloomingdales, Gallery 828 and Old Asia

A Valentine Concert
February 14
Level 2, Grand Atrium
7pm

A romantic Valentine presentation featuring Broadway love songs by Audie Gemora and Cathy Azanza

New Year Lion and Dragon Dance Parade, Live Band Performance and Fireworks Display
February 16
Streetscape
10pm

The spectacle features lion and dragon dances and a live performance from Circus Band, capped off with a rousing fireworks display

Post-Valentine Presentation
Jazz and contemporary musical performances
Skarlet
February 23
Level 2, Grand Atrium
6pm

Girl Valencia
February 25
Level 2, Grand Atrium
5pm

Shangri-La Plaza

PARTY MISSIONARIES. Raji Mata, Manolet Dario and Osang Yulo

ATOMIC ROYALTY. Atom Henares and his court

PERFECTLY DEFECTED. Karl Ty and Copyright

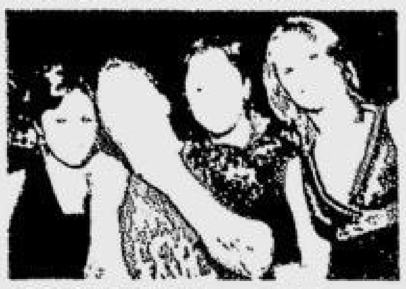
SUPERFLY resident Karl Ty knows what a good party is all about

For the love of dance, beats and house music!

BIG FISH AND SUPERFLY joined forces for the love of house music, peace and dance and brought in Defected in the House featuring Copyright to Philippine shores. The two major forces in the industry worked together for an awesome night of music, love and peace.

Defected in the House is the UK's No. 1 House music brand—it has clinched seven awards in the House Music awards held in London. Among the awards they raked in were Label of the Year, Best Club Night (for Defected in the House—Pacha, Ibiza), the most prestigious titles in the UK house music industry. The lineup of local top award-winning DJs included Karl Ty of Superfly and Paolo Maralit of NBK added to the experience. There's no doubt about it—these masterminds of music treated Manila to a night of house music perfection that people will remember for a long time.

E-TRAIN. Antz Santiago, JM Rodriguez and Martin de Guzman


MOTO PARTY. Ibay and Mari Litonjua party with Superfly folks

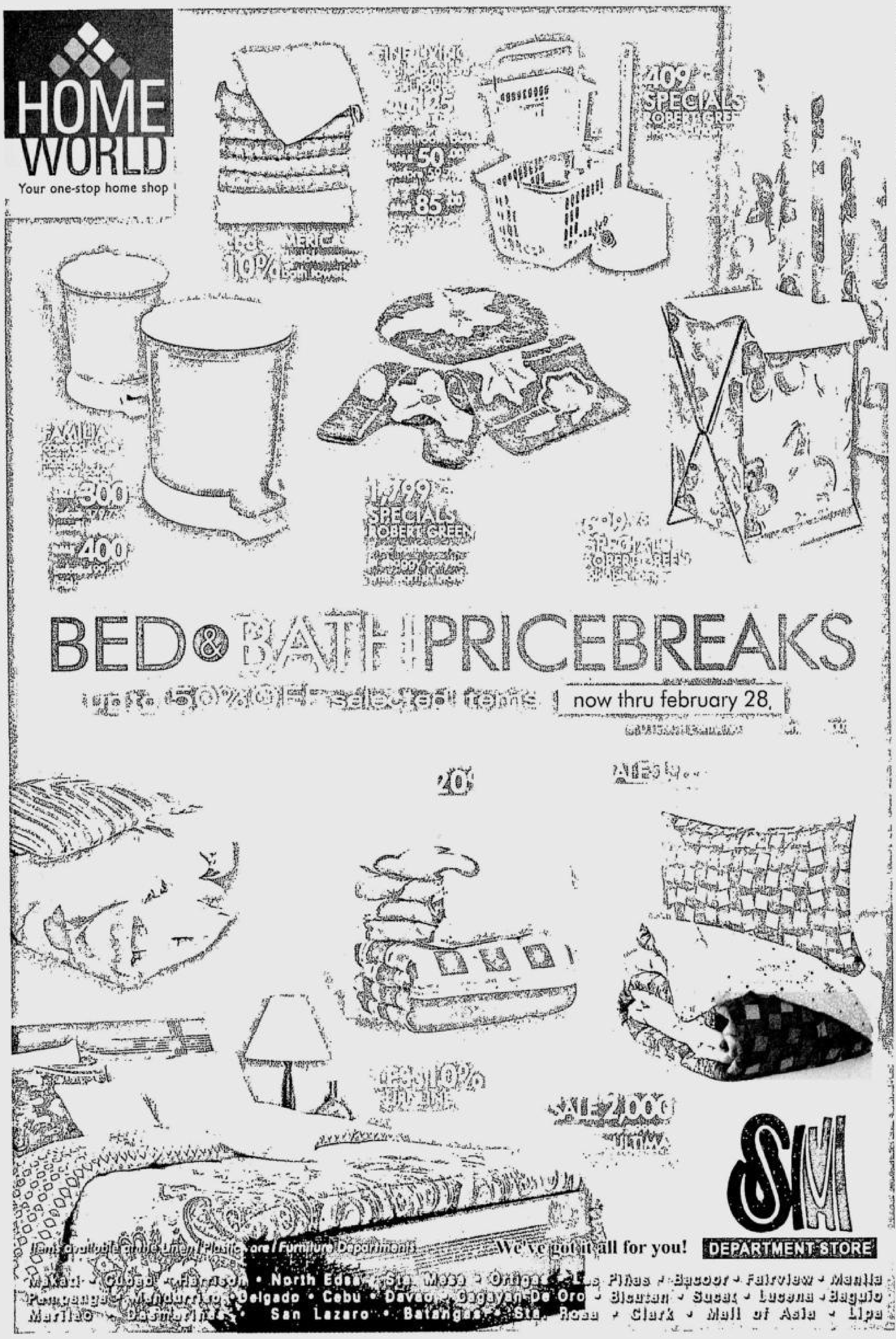
SUPERFLY'S CENTURY. Mariel Santos and Leo Po

hedkandi
BIGFISH
THE BACK TO

Back to love and beyond!

IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO love—Kandi is feeling nostalgic for good times past. So join them for a party of full on classic Kandi house, timeless tune after timeless tune, leaving a trail of guaranteed Goosebumps spine tingles and a nonstop loving all night long. Kicking off the year of a new Bigfish, World Trade Center will be transformed on the night by the most luxurious décor next Saturday (Feb. 17).

For ticket inquiries please call the Bigfish numbers 6327762 or 6348238.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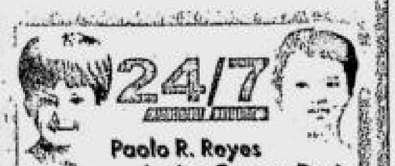
Your one-stop home shop

BED & BATH PRICEBREAKS
up to 50% OFF selected items | now thru february 28

Items available at the Linen / Plastic ware / Furniture Departments
We've got it all for you!
SM DEPARTMENT STORE
Makati • Cubao • Harrison • North Edsa • Sta. Mesa • Ortigas • Las Piñas • Bacoor • Fairview • Manila
Pampanga • Mandurriao • Delgado • Cebu • Davao • Cagayan De Oro • Bicutan • Sucat • Lucena • Baguio
Marilao • Dasmariñas • San Lazaro • Batangas • Sta. Rosa • Clark • Mall of Asia • Lipa

Jazz blast



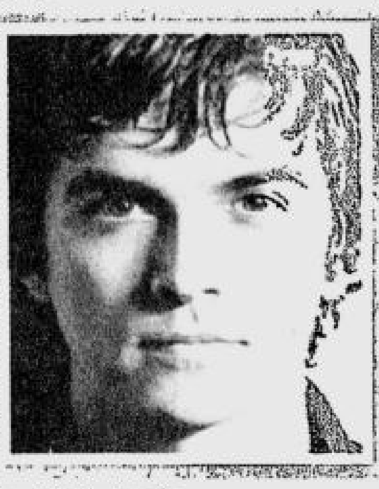
Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenco-Dario

THIS FEBRUARY, LEND your support to [illegible] Society [illegible] Philippines as they undertake the massive step of mounting the 2007 Philippine International Jazz and Arts Festival (philjazzfest.com) from Feb. 13 to 24 at eight participating malls around the city.

Over 30 of the country's top jazz bands and soloists will be performing alongside world-class foreign artists [illegible] Janice [illegible] Harrington, Michael Konik and Charmaine Clamor. The venues include Glorietta on Feb. 15, Serendra on Feb. 16, Rockwell on Feb. 17, Alabang Town Center on Feb. 18, The Podium on Feb. 19, Market! Market! on Feb. 20, Eastwood City on Feb. 21 and Greenbelt 3 Park on Feb. 22.

The festival will culminate with two high-powered gala concerts featuring today's Big Four [illegible] jazz queen Flora Purim and percussion king Airto Moreira on Feb. 23 at [illegible] Palace as well as [illegible] chanteuse Diane Schuur [illegible] jazz piano prince Eldar Djangirov on Feb. [illegible]

[illegible] Sofitel Philippine Plaza [illegible] 890-2016 [illegible]



Andy Caldwell

[illegible] tonight [illegible] fame, creating a steady stream [illegible] OM Records, Naked Music and Inspirit. He has also composed tracks for such TV shows as "Six Feet Under" and "Boston Public" [illegible] Miguel Migs. Tonight, [illegible] catch him along with local spinmeisters DJs [illegible] and Jason [illegible] Warehouse [illegible] Yakal St. [illegible] Makati. Call 817-0506. Ladies, if you arrive before midnight you get in free.

Other super 24/7 events

Feb. 10, Saturday

Orange & Lemons, Swiss, Pedicab, Kapatid & Up Dharma Down at Saguijo; Indio I at 70s Bistro; Sharon Cuneta at Araneta Coliseum; Deep Down & Discofied w/ DJs Karl Ty & Marie Garcia at Piamma; Latin House [illegible] Tribo [illegible] Mezze; DJs Paolo Maralit [illegible] Ocampo [illegible] Soundsgood; DJ [illegible] Embassy Cuisine; House [illegible] Capone [illegible] Tolo Boto at Temple; Bacardi Bling [illegible] Makati; DJ Scratchmart [illegible] Dragon Saturday at Bed.

Feb. 11, Sunday

[illegible] Salonga: Uncut at PICC; Melanie [illegible] at Ninoy Aquino Stadium; The Pretenders [illegible] CCP; Andrew Lloyd Webber's Song and Dance at Onstage Greenbelt; Sunday Brunch Al Fresco w/ Concertino at Azzurro Linden Suites.

Feb. 12, Monday

Happy Mondays [illegible] Borgy Manotoc at Embassy Cuisine; I Don't Like Mondays! w/ DJ RO at Gweilo's Makati; Chemical Underground at Absinth; Retro Nights at Azzurro Linden Suite.

Feb. 13, Tuesday

Sir Cliff Richard at Araneta Coliseum; Cuisine Royale w/ DJ Manolet Dario at Embassy Cuisine; 80s & 90s Night w/ DJ Jeff [illegible] at Temple; Nyko Maca, Tropikasya [illegible] and Sound [illegible] at Saguijo; DJ Erwin Edralin & Patch at Absinth; Guarana at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; [illegible] Duran at Azzurro Linden Suite.

Feb. 14, Wednesday

Valentine [illegible] Degustation [illegible] Mezze; Buon San Valentino! at Segafredo Espresso Bar; Sweet Escapade Valentine Promo w/ [illegible] Azzurro Linden Suites; [illegible] Maca, Sino Sikat? & Co [illegible] Saguijo [illegible] Mari Miranda [illegible] Johnny [illegible] at Embassy Club; Love Rock Band [illegible] Temple; Willy Wonka's Music Factory at Gweilo's Makati; DJ Kimozave & Chasmy at Prince of Jaipur; Jazz Night at Magnet Cafe; [illegible] Metro Bar; Paul Williams & Danny [illegible] at Araneta Coliseum.

Feb. 15, Thursday

[illegible] Session w/ Dan dela Prada & Empathy [illegible] Cafe; Reggae: Missing Cat, Zebra Island and Peacepipe [illegible] Saguijo; Brownman Revival [illegible] 70s Bistro; La Luna Loca w/ Tribo Manila at Mezze; Fluxxed: Whatever Thursday [illegible] with SPIT at Magnet Cafe.

Feb. 16, Friday

[illegible] Fuego w/ Lucy Torres-Gomez at Music Museum; Radioactive Sago Project [illegible] Saguijo; Latin Connection w/ DJs Karl Ty & Paolo Cabalfin at Piedra; DJ Boyet Almazan [illegible]; DJ Tony Pavia at Mezze; House Sessions at Piamma; MYHOUSE w/ DJ Elian at M Cafe; Sunshine [illegible] DJ Mon Marambo [illegible] Owen Sun at Embassy Club; [illegible] Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; Live w/ DJ Darrel McDash at Temple; [illegible] 70s Bistro [illegible] Azzurro Linden Suite.

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more info [illegible] 2857 (Globe and [illegible] (Smart) [illegible] 24/7 [illegible] Submit your [illegible] [illegible]@[illegible] 247@yahoo.com

2007 Philippine International
Jazz & Arts festival
Flora Purim
FLORA'S SONG
AIRTO MOREIRA LIFE AFTER THAT
ELDAR

PARTY MISSIONARIES. Raji Mata, Manolet Dario and Osang Yulo

ATOMIC ROYALTY. Atom Henares and his court

PERFECTLY DEFECTED. Karl Ty and Copyright

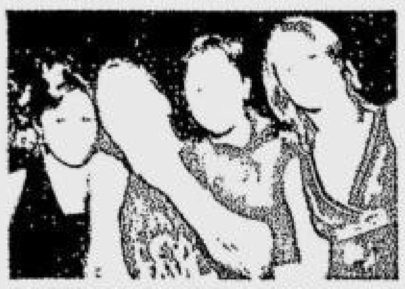
SUPERFLY resident Karl Ty knows what a good party is all about

For the love of dance, beats and house music!

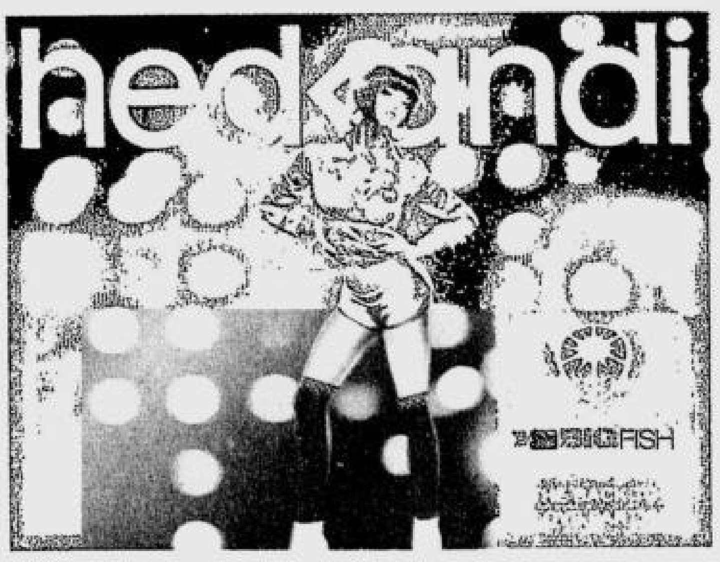
BIG FISH AND SUPERFLY joined forces for the love of house music, peace and dance and brought in Defected in the House featuring Copyright to Philippine shores. The two major forces in the industry worked together for an awesome night of music, love and peace.

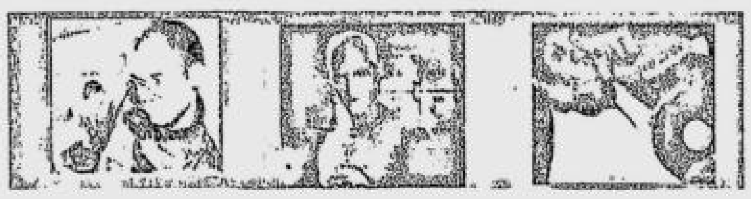
Defected in the House is the UK's No. 1 House music brand—it has clinched seven awards in the House Music awards held in London. Among the awards they raked in were Label of the Year, Best Club Night (for Defected in the House—Pacha, Ibiza), the most prestigious titles in the UK house music industry. The lineup of local top award-winning DJs included Karl Ty of Superfly and Paolo Maralit of NBK added to the experience. There's no doubt about it—these masterminds of music treated Manila to a night of house music perfection that people will remember for a long time.

E-TRAIN. Antz Santiago, JM Rodriguez and Martin de Guzman


MOTO PARTY. Ibay and Mari Litonjua party with Superfly folks

SUPERFLY'S CENTURY. Mariel Santos and Leo Po





Back to love and beyond!

IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO love—Kandi is feeling nostalgic for good times past. So join them for a party of full on classic Kandi house, timeless tune after timeless tune, leaving a trail of guaranteed Goosebumps spine tingles and a nonstop loving all night long. Kicking off the year of a new Bigfish, World Trade Center will be transformed on the night by the most luxurious décor next Saturday (Feb. 17).

For ticket inquiries please call the Bigfish numbers 6327762 or 6348238.

Jazz blast

24/7

Paolo R. Reyes

Janine Cuenco-Dario

THE FEBRUARY [illegible] 2007 Philippine [illegible] Jazz and Arts [illegible] the participating [illegible] round the [illegible]

Over 30 of the country's [illegible] bands and soloists [illegible] Hirano [illegible] Konik and Charmaine Clamor [illegible] venues include Glorietta [illegible] Rockwell [illegible] The Podium [illegible] Market! Market! [illegible] Greenbelt 3 Park [illegible]

[illegible] Flora Purim and [illegible]

[illegible] Sofitel Philippine [illegible] 890-2011 [illegible]

And [illegible]

[illegible] Miguel [illegible] tonight [illegible] Warehouse 85 [illegible] Makati [illegible] midnight [illegible]

Other Super 24/7 events

Feb. 10 Saturday

[illegible] Redcab [illegible] Sharon [illegible] Soundgood [illegible] Embassy [illegible] Capone [illegible] Scratchmatic [illegible]

Feb. 11 Sunday

[illegible] Greenbelt [illegible] Linden Suite.

Feb. 12 Monday

Borgy & Manolo [illegible] Embassy; [illegible] Dolce Live [illegible] DJ RO at Gweilo, Makati; [illegible] Underground [illegible] Retro Night [illegible] Azzurro Linden Suite.

Feb. 13 Tuesday

[illegible] Coliseum [illegible] Cuisine Royale [illegible] DJ Manolet Dario at Embassy [illegible] Temple [illegible] Linden Suite.

Feb. 14 Wednesday

[illegible] Mezzo: Buon San Valentino [illegible] Segafredo Espresso Bar [illegible] Escapades Valentine promo [illegible]

[illegible] Willy Wonka's [illegible]

Feb. 15 Thursday

[illegible] Embassy [illegible] Mezzo [illegible]

Feb. 16 Friday

[illegible] Radioactive [illegible] DJs Karl Ty & Paolo Cabalfin [illegible] Embassy [illegible]

[illegible] @yahoo.com

2007 Philippine International

Jazz Arts Fest
Flora Purim
FLORA'S SONG
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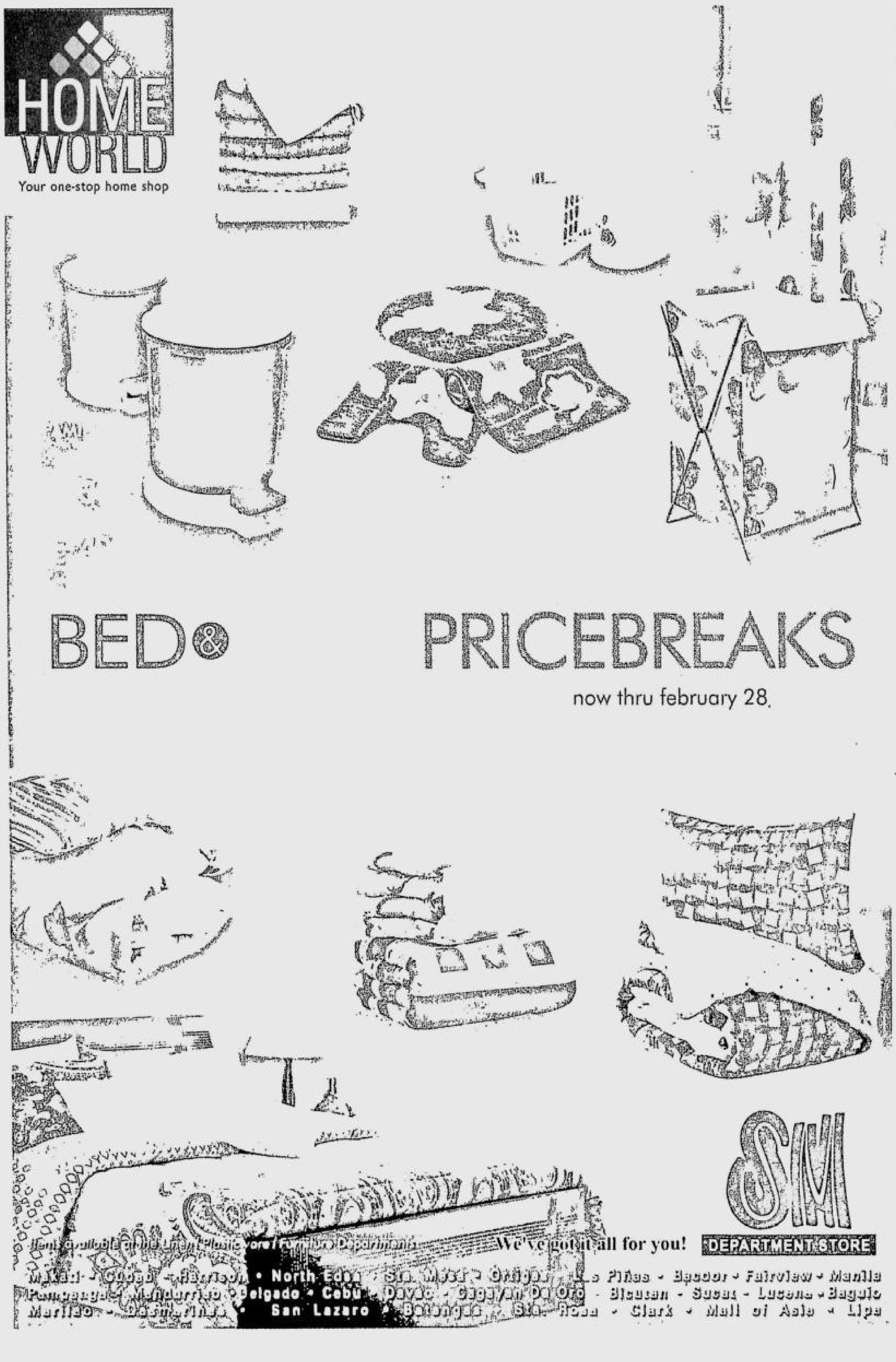
2
MOREIRA LIFE AFTER THAT
3
ELDAR
4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Super

style

pop culture . entertainment . recreation

Joan Bitagcol, supermodel and photographer

THE THING about fame is that ... WOW!

The thing I love most about what I do is ... getting to do what I love and getting compensated at the same time.

People might be surprised to know that ... I used to be a factory worker.

The most important thing I've ever learned is that ... having a good reputation is the best investment one can have.

I wish when I started off I've been told to ... just do my job and not mind procrastinators.

The worst thing that ever happened to me was that ... nothing. I take all of it as good memories.

My Super! Saturday night consists of ... DVD marathons at home or movie night-outs.

If I was invisible for a day, I would ... 1-2-3 in planes! Haha!

The thing that makes me most angry is ... unreasonable people.

If I was the most powerful person on earth ... I would change all bad politicians.

The best thing about family is that ... they love and support you no matter what.

When I'm gone, they'll probably say ... Goodbye! Haha.

If money was no option ... everybody will be much happier.

When I retire, I would like ... to settle in a place where I can play with my grandchildren.

My hero is ... everyone. I do think that each one of us can contribute to society in our own little manner.

The thing that makes my life worth living is ... my family.

My greatest hope for the future is ... for our country to be richer in all aspects.

The worst thing somebody said about me was ... I was a tomboy!

My favorite moments are when ... I'm sleeping.

I'm saving up for ... a trip around the world.

My biggest indulgence is ... sleep.

My current state of mind is ... Happy!

If someone would play me in my biopic it would be ... Tilda Swinston, Cate Blanchett or Christine Scott Thomas.

My five favorite words are ... *Hay nako,* good luck!

I aspire to be ... GOOD.

I love ... my family and my boyfriend!

For me, hearts represent ... happiness!

On Valentine's day I will ... SECRET!!!

My most memorable date was when ... everything!!!

I get *kilig* when ... SECRET!!!

From factory worker to fashion star

By Tim Yap
Photo by Jun de Leon

I'VE SLEPT WITH JOAN BITAGcol. Yes, on the same bed. This happened in Paris, when Joan was a struggling model, and I, well I was just struggling.

Of course, this was years ago, and now the scene's favorite ramp star shines in a different light—as a photographer. Two passions combined and she excels in both.

So busy is she that we had to conduct this interview over her new Sony Ericsson Z610i, who, just like Joan, is a rare combination of great looks and standout features. Feel free to eavesdrop, or shall I say teleconference with us.

Interesting contradictions

"I enjoy modeling because of the shared creativity and the talented characters you meet. Their energy and passion for what they do is infectious."

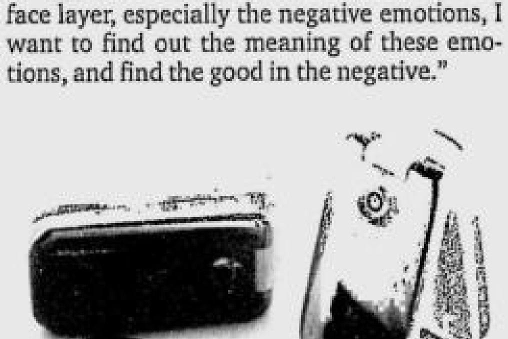
Joan is my favorite date because despite she never lets her fashion industry status get into her head. Even over the phone, you can feel her sincerity. She is endearingly naive, like a little girl but with the strength of an Amazon woman. In short, she is a surprising mix of interesting contradictions.

"I don't really enjoy the glamorous part of the job, the social life, I don't like smoke or noise. I'd rather go home, I didn't go through that stage (going out, partying), I don't attend events unless I need to or I'm with my close friends." Sometimes I would have to drag her out just to watch a movie with me.

Her model discovery story has been told and retold. From factory girl eating *pancit* in Bulacan to her current status as supermodel slash photographer working only with the industry's brightest—Joan has indeed the best of both worlds.

Photography has become a passion for the self made Miss B. "If could introduce reality and irony to my work then I'm good." When she doesn't have her camera around, her Sony Ericsson Z610i has a great two megapixel camera that makes her capture life's little details.

"I want to see beyond the façade, the surface layer, especially the negative emotions, I want to find out the meaning of these emotions, and find the good in the negative."



JOAN BITAGCOL is totting the latest Z610i "mirror" clamshell that opens to hidden depths with an array of advanced features—a 2-megapixel camera, broadband-speed 3G connectivity and concealed external display.

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This Mich can stitch

By Tim Yap

SAY MICH DULCE TO A TRUE fashion maven and images of lavishly textured garments in hand-treated fabrics might run riot in her head. Mich Dulce's designs reveal the training she received at some of the world's best fashion schools like Central Saint Martins, London College of Fashion, and the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. Not content with clothing alone, she recently took up millinery and bag design and has unleashed a flurry of delightful headpieces onto Manila's runways. It's the sort of background that makes itself apparent in Mich's aesthetic—a sense of the sublime coupled generously with exuberant experimentation. She launched her eponymous label in 2001 and in 2002 she was a finalist for the Paris Young Designer's Competition and 1st runner up in the Mega Young Designer's Competition. In 2004 she was nominated for Revolutionary Designer of the Year at the MTV Style Awards.

This year Mich Dulce unveils a Spring/Summer 2007 collection that is equal parts whimsy and wear-ability. In a stroke of inspiration, she de-claws her critics' most bitter utterances and almost serenely infuses them into her "rich girl" collection by way of embroidered and screen-printed motifs.

Wickedly nostalgic

Without losing Mich's trademark quirks and offbeat draping, the collection manages to fuse contemporary shapes and prints with a tailored, more mature sensibility. The result is an evolved assemblage of wickedly nostalgic, unexpectedly pretty pieces, from her T-shirt pieces of silk-screened diamonds to her unusually-sculpted cocktail dresses.

This collection also debuts a first in the industry as Mich joins forces with French thread brand DMC. Known for the finest embroidery threads, DMC is the consummate partner for a long-term collaboration that elevates the concept of what needlework can be and, as the designer describes it, "breaks the barriers of cross stitch and modernizes kitsch."

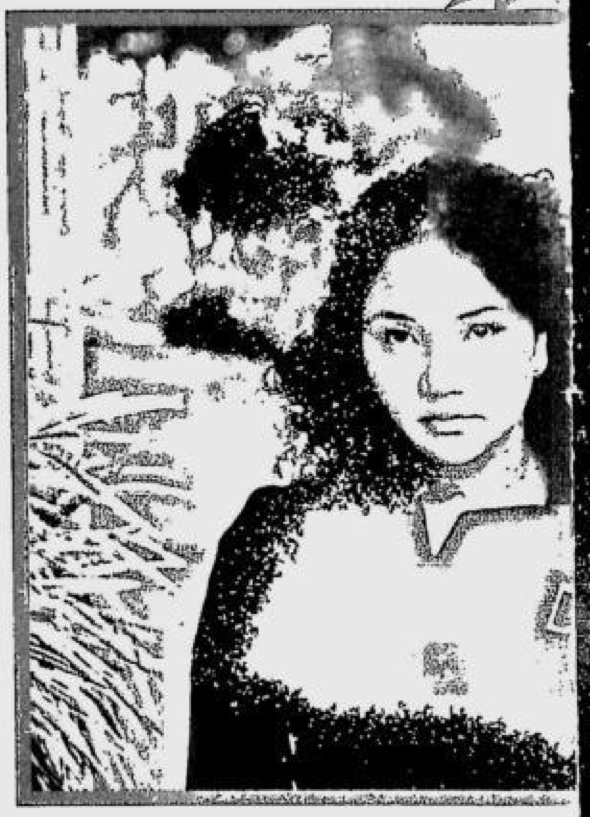
It's an alliance bent on illustrating how traditional cross stitch can be used to create new and surprising pieces that accentuate and complement the wardrobe of any woman—or man, for that matter.

Cerebral jigsaw

The limited edition accessories designed by Mich Dulce using DMC threads pop up amongst Mich's clothes, creating a cerebral jigsaw of homespun charm. Belts, bags, sashes, and hats are so wonderfully embroidered that one can't help but be reminded of nimble hands. It's a seamless fit between a designer with a penchant for handmade, crafty kitsch, and a 250-year old company committed to building creativity through DIY fashion. An avid endorser of self-expression through stitching, DMC thought it only fitting to work with a designer who has as much passion for handmade objects as they do. The result is a select line of Mich Dulce for DMC cross stitch kits with five limited edition designs—from framables to bags and charms—unveiled every month and made available in stores for consumers to create themselves. It's a collection that delightfully dismisses any remaining notion that cross stitch is the exclusive domain of our grandmothers.

With the help of Focus Global Inc., the exclusive DMC distributor, this collection takes a traditional, handcrafted detail and gives it a global appeal that is still, undeniably, Mich Dulce.

Mich's SS 2007 collection will be available at Store For All Seasons, Rustans Makati. You may also order through +639178951743. The Mich Dulce for DMC kits will be available at DMC stores in SM Megamall, Araneta Gateway and SM Southmall.



Lug it with love

SAMSONITE, THE WORLD leader in travel solutions introduces the second installment of the new "travel influencer" global campaign for its premium line Samsonite black label. This campaign is the second in a series of advertisements from Samsonite black label, the first featuring entrepreneur Richard Branson.

Inspired by a period when travel was in itself a luxury, the campaign has been developed by Samsonite's global advertising agency TBWA, with Brussels managing the global business. The advertising goes live in print and outdoor late Spring early Fall. The striking advertisements feature mother and daughter Isabella Rossellini and Elettra Rossellini Wiedemann, in a scene that truly reflects their travel lives. Shot in New York by leading fashion and celebrity portrait photographer Norman Jean Roy, the nostalgic and glamorous images were captured in one day in the interior of a private jet.

Isabella Rossellini was chosen to represent Samsonite black label Vintage because of her classic iconic beauty. Elettra Rossellini Wiedemann was chosen because of her modern elegance and sophistication; both represent the glamour of a worldly traveler.

The Vintage collection introduced by Samsonite's global creative director Quentin Mackay is inspired by the golden era of travel when luxurious destinations beckoned the heart of the adventurer. Vintage embodies the very essence of the 1930's and 1940's era when escaping to Morocco, Paris and Shanghai was a past time pursued by Hollywood starlets, socialites or bold adventure-seekers.

The range offers sleek styles making luggage an essential accessory for jet-set travelers. Each Vintage piece offers the quality and durability that Samsonite has delivered consistently for nearly 100 years. Fine detailing such as the tweed fabric, removable Smartsleeve, leather strap and the special Travel Sentry lock complement the authentic touches that have been incorporated. The range has been created with a modern twist; including leather and hardware accents and rich interiors. Compartments and organizational features, inspired by the early travel trunks and wardrobe cases, offer functionality for today.

"Samsonite's black label Vintage collection is inspired by the era when travel was an indulgence," says Quentin Mackay. "Isabella and Elettra perfectly convey the very essence of glamour and elegance so integral to the collection."

Save and choose your gi

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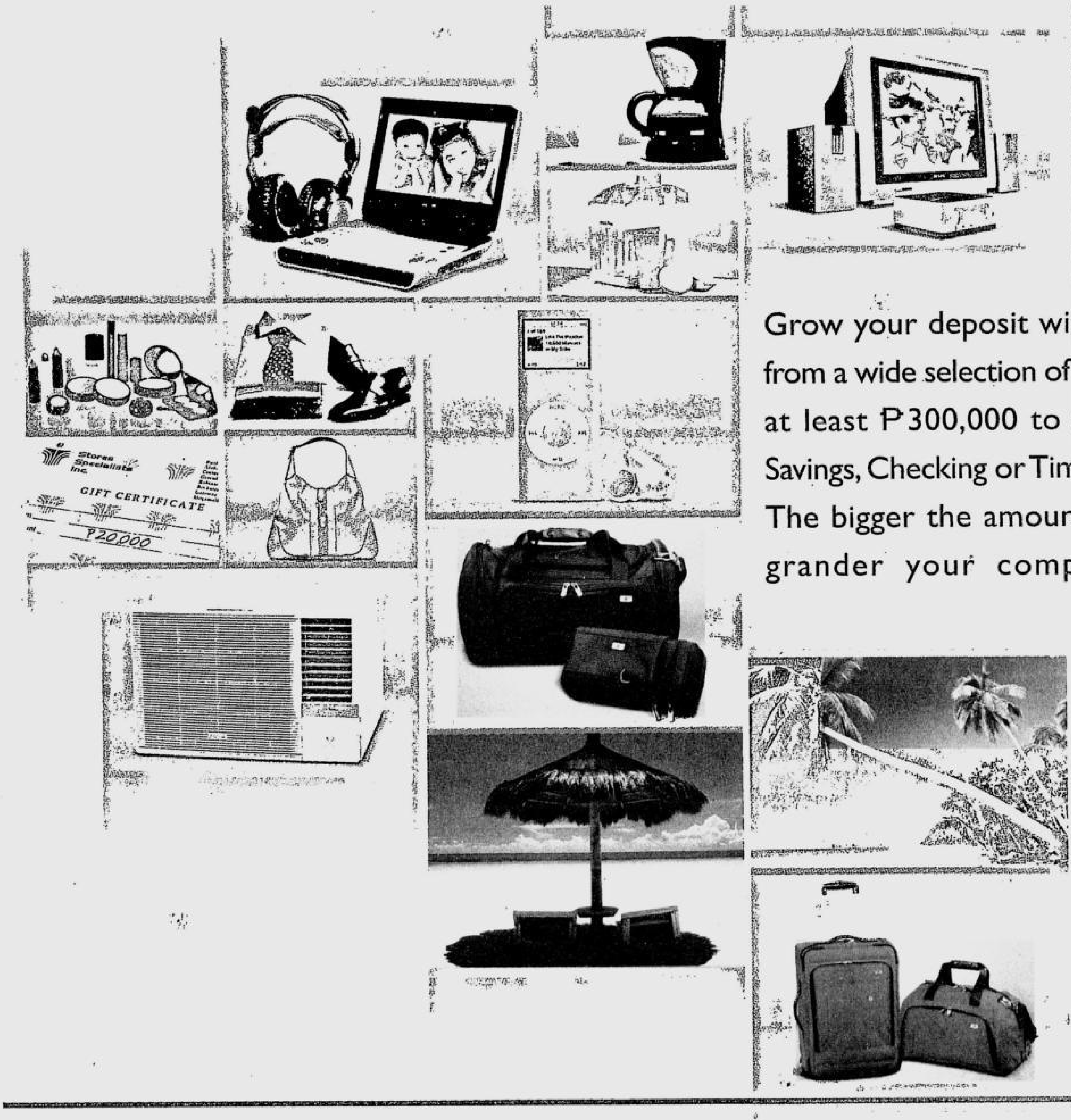

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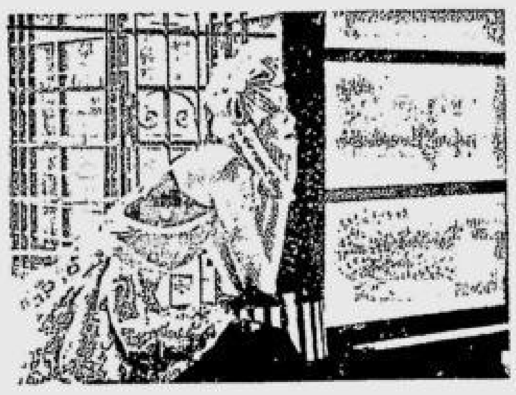
Mich Dulce, designer



THE THING about fame is that ... I can't go a day without someone saying "*Uy*, big brother, big brother." Sooooo annoying!

The thing I love most about what I do is ... it's so emotionally rewarding when people appreciate your work.

People might be surprised to know that ... at the end of the day I just want to get married and have kids and be Betty Crocker. Haha.

My best ever outfit consisted of ... my mom's vintage Nina Ricci dress, her slingback heels and a whole lot of neon.

My Super! Saturday night consists of ... going out to a gig.

The soundtrack to my life would include ... Bratmobile's "Bitch Theme."

The thing that makes me most angry are ... cheating bastards and so-called "friends" who aren't loyal and stab you in the back.

If I was the most powerful person on earth ... I would campaign for curly hair empowerment.

The best thing about family is that ... they love you despite your flaws, mood swings and psycho-ness.

When I'm gone, they'll probably say ... "*Ah, sya ba yung kulot?*"

If money was no option ... I would travel every month.

When I retire, I would like ... a really massive studio where I could just sew and paint and do everything I wish I had time to do.

My hero is ... Vivienne Westwood. I love her!

The thing that makes my life worth living is ... meeting so many wonderful people and having them as friends.

My favorite moments are when ... you're just sitting and talking with friends who you're comfortable with and it's like you're connected.

I'm saving up for ... a flat in London.

My biggest indulgence is ... designer bags.

My current state of mind is ... calm.

If someone would play me in my biopic it would be ... still ME!

My five favorite words are ... cute, *ahlavet*, *nakakaloka*, "Hello *ka*!" (a Michael Salientes trademark we have all learned to love).

I aspire to be ... international!

I love ... my friends and especially my assistant Ava. Don't leave me!

On Valentine's day I will ... probably do what I do on a normal day! I'm not a big Valentine's Day fan. In college my single girl friends and I all wore pins which said "Why don't you loff me!!!" *Uyy*, bitter!

My most memorable date was when ... we went to see fireworks on bonfire night in London but were in a completely different zip code from the park we were looking for. We ended up just watching them from the middle of the road between buildings. LOL.

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See flyers for more details.

Carla Guevarra's comeback

By Tim Yap

LAST NIGHT'S THUNDERous applause and standing ovation was but a proper and fitting welcome for someone who has been missed by the stage. Yes, Carla Guevarra is back, and you better be ready for her.

Theater folk know how tenacious a performer she is. Now she has the stage all to herself in Repertory Philippines' version of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Song and Dance." And she does not need an understudy. She is her own understudy. Wait till you hear her version of "Tell Me on A Sunday"—the best I have ever heard from any local stage actress. I watched the other members of the audience and I saw tears in their eyes. Carla Guevarra had gripped them—by the balls.

Proof of her innate strength is, after doing Miss Saigon for three years (where she did Kim, Mimi and Yvette—hmmm, I wonder if she even understudied The Engineer) she went back to Manila to pursue television and the movies. "I had a kissing scene with Diether Ocampo!" And countless others, all in the name of art.

Now married to Godfrey Laforteza, and the mother of two kids, she has survived living in New York. And we all know it is NOT easy being a mother to two kids in New York. But she did it, and did it quite well—just as she would do in any role given to her. She juggled studies, working in a restaurant on Broadway, being a wife and mother—all at the same time.

Her travails as a New York survivor and victor has become her main source of inspiration for her role of Emma, which was originated on the Broadway stage by *the* Bernadette Peters.

Carla now is as exhilarating as ever. Once she asked theater colleague JM Rodriguez to take her clubbing to Embassy. "I don't know what to wear to the clubs anymore. Do I still know people?" She didn't know some, but a lot of them *still* knew her. No one easily forgets a character quite like Carla Guevarra—she knew how to make an entrance. She made a graceful temporary exit, but now she returns in a big way, alone on a stage that was made for her.

Repertory Philippines' "Song and Dance" premiered last night Feb. 9 and will run on Saturdays and Sundays at 3 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. until March 4 at Onstage Greenbelt. For tickets, call 8870710.

Carla Guevarra-Laforteza, actress

THE THING about fame is that ... it is earned.

The thing I love most about what I do is ... that I get to be whoever or whatever character.

People might be surprised to know that ... I want five more kids!

The worst thing that ever happened to me was ... I got "exiled" to the USA and had to stay there for six years. My dad wouldn't let me go home till I finished school.

The secret to happiness is ... JESUS.

My best ever outfit consisted of ... a wedding gown, a tiara, a 20-foot veil with train, and a princess cut diamond ring on my finger.

If I were invisible for a day, I would ... sneak into Brad Pitt's house and watch him take a shower. Hmmmmm.

The thing that makes me most angry is ... people not doing what they were instructed to do.

If I was the most powerful person on earth ... I would stop the war in Iraq.

When I'm gone, they'll probably say ... *Aba, tumahimik yata yung bahay!* Hahaha.

If money was no option, I would ... produce the best musical in the world (a compilation of all my dream roles) and I will of course star in it!

When I retire ... I would like to have a rest house on the beach, and a penthouse in NYC's upper east side.

The world would be a much better place if ... The Middle East and the USA never started fighting in the first place!

The thing that makes my life worth living ... are my babies ... Sophia, Basil and Guprey.

My greatest hope for the future is ... for my children to grow up in a world with no war and with an abundance of opportunities.

The worst thing somebody said about me was ... "Are you on drugs?"

My favorite moments are ... when my children's faces light up when they see me when I come home from work, and when I read them their bedtime story and cuddle with me till they fall asleep.

I'm saving up for ... my kids' college tuition.

My biggest indulgence is ... FOOD!!!! FOOD!!! FOOD!!!

My current state of mind is ... confusion.

If someone would play me in my biopic it would be ... ME!!! I'm too crazy, my life and personality are too complicated and no one will be able to figure me out to be able to play me.

My five favorite words are ... hungry, food, cake, pizza and rice.

I aspire to be ... noticed once again for my talents and craft.

I love ... to eat.

On Valentine's Day ... I will be in Hong Kong with my hubby dubby, Guprey.

My most memorable date was when ... this guy I was dating sent me a box with a dress and a pair of shoes inside and a note that told me to be ready by six. He surprised me and took me to a concert at a five-star hotel and a candlelit dinner at a very expensive restaurant. It was so dreamy!

I get *kilig* when ... I get text messages from my hunny.

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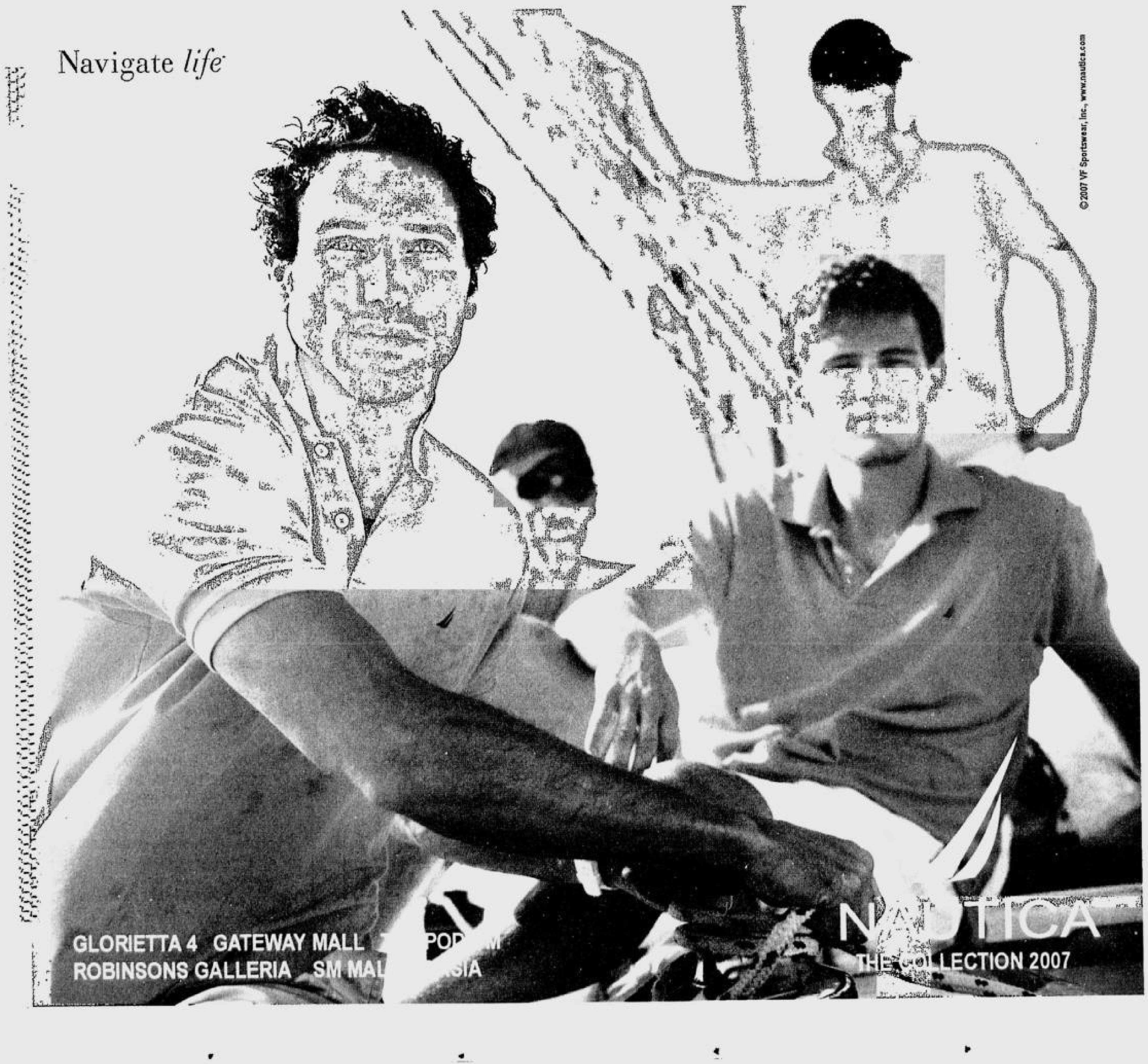
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SATURDAY Special

Editor **Nestor U. Torre** • Assistant Editor **Rito P. Asilo**

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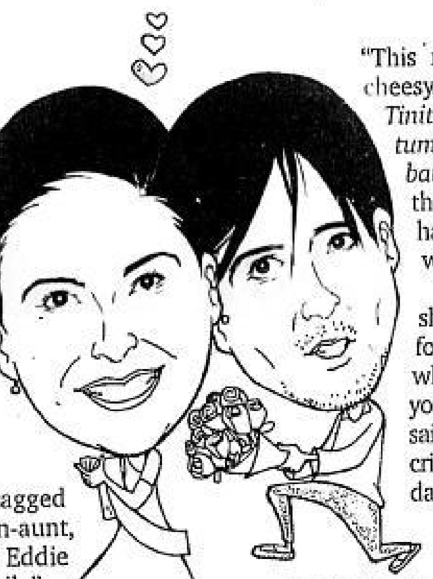
CHARLENE and Aga with their twins, Andres and Atasha.

Aga finds perfect partner in Charlene

By Rito P. Asilo



GONZALES AND MUHLACH. Divine intervention.

CARICATURE BY LA MISTADES

LAST WEEK, WE WERE PLEASantly surprised to meet a very open Aga Muhlach over the late lunch arranged by his manager, Ethel Ramos, at Annabel's for our Valentine story this week. What could be more fitting than a feature about the country's premier heartthrob and his beautiful wife, Charlene Gonzales?

Epic drama

Twenty eight years after he tagged along with his movie queen-aunt, Amalia Fuentes, to the set of Eddie Romero's epic drama, "Aguila" (which topbilled Fernando Poe Jr., Christopher de Leon and Fuentes), to play a bit role, Aga remains a much sought-after leading man, though admittedly, he has become more choosy with the film projects he accepts. His next movie marks his first team-up with Maricel Soriano, and his reunion with "Bagets'" director, Maryo J. delos Reyes.

"I only leave home when I shoot," Aga shares. "It's been almost six years since Charlene and I got married (the couple tied the knot on May 28, 2001). Now, my days are never complete without her."

But, as Aga later reveals, their love story wasn't really a case of love at first sight. They were *never* even sweethearts—until he popped the question!

He relates: "We laugh about this every time we recall how we ended up together. I met Charlene when she was only 12—and that was only because her cousin, JC Bonnin, was a good friend of mine. There were no romantic sparks then, and there were none when we met again when she competed in the Binibining Pilipinas pageant, where I was one of the judges.

Small talk

"Later, we did 'Oki Doki Dok' together and still, we didn't go out. We didn't even call each other. *Hanggang* small talk *lang kami.* We'd go out with the cast, I'd ask her to check out the girls I was dating. Then, one time, after we had dinner with the cast, I drove her to the Sampaguita studios—and that's where it happened!

"This may sound corny or cheesy, but it was like magic. *Tinitingnan ko siya habang tumatakbo siyang parang bata.* Right there and then, I told myself that I had found the woman I was going to marry!

"When we taped the show in Singapore the following week, that was when I asked her, 'Will you marry me?'—and she said yes! *(laughs)* And I cried, because it suddenly dawned on me that I was finally getting married! Well, I was ready to settle down. But, I think it was also Divine intervention—and destiny!"

Aga has found his soulmate in the kind beauty queen who, like him, enjoys just staying home with the kids, fraternal twins Atasha and Andres. He says he trusts Charlene with the major decisions at home because he trusts her judgment, but she lets Aga make the final decision.

He adds: "On our second year, we fought about petty things, but we learned how to solve our problems immediately and talk about them before they got worse. *Kung nag-aaway kami,* we say sorry *agad. Binigay ko na ang buhay ko sa kanya,* so *wala nang* pride-pride!"

Pure heart

How do they spend Valentine's Day? Aga says they don't: "Valentine's is everyday for us—we're together all the time, we talk a lot, we play sports together. I used to be very romantic, but *nasira ako kay* Charlene because, even before I could do anything for her, *palagi niya akong nauunahan!* My wife has a pure heart—she's one of a kind."

Aga is appreciative of the blessings. He explains: "I always look at the brighter things in life. I've learned respect from Charlene.

"Married life has given me a sense of security—*wala ka nang kakailanganin pa. 'Pag nagkasakit ka, may magdadala sa 'yo sa ospital. 'Pag may problema ka, may maiiyakan ka. 'Pag masaya ka,* you have someone to share it with—what more can I ask for? Life is good!"

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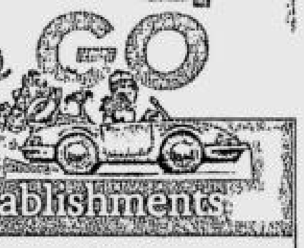

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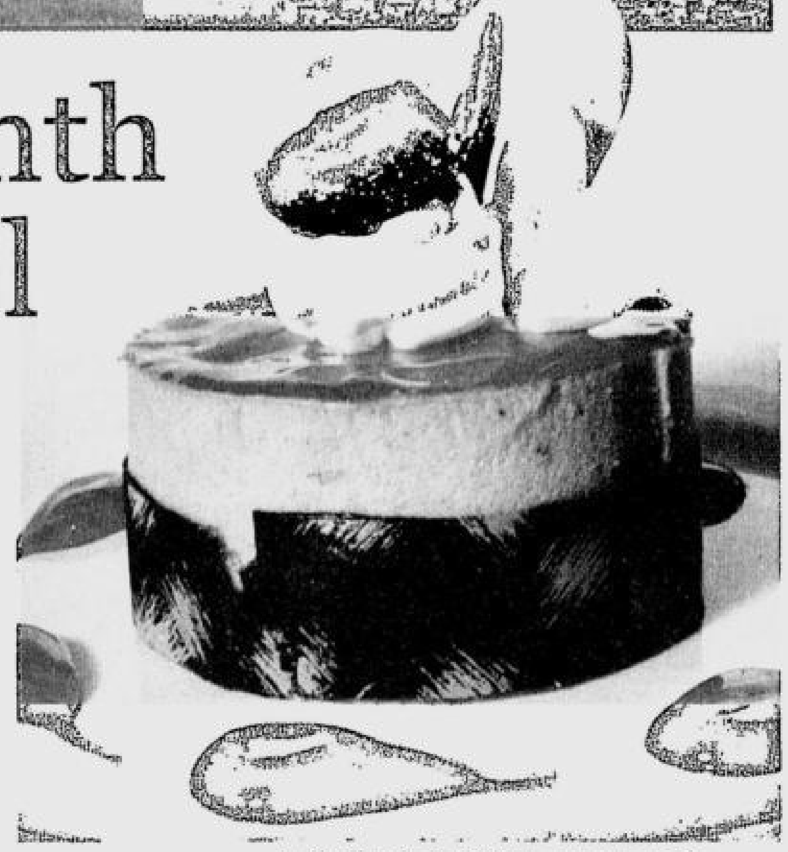
This love month at Dusit Hotel



EXPRESS YOUR LOVE THIS VALENTINE'S Day with a Strawberry Cheesecake specially created by Dusit Hotel Nikko's award-winning pastry chefs. The luscious melangé of strawberry, chocolate and cheesecake will be given to the ladies for those availing of the Valentine dinner menus in any of the Hotel's specialty restaurants.

Enliven your zest for romance on Feb. 14 by way of indulging your palates with the Valentine dinner buffet of Dusit Hotel Nikko's The Café priced at P900++ per person only. This special dinner buffet includes healthy food choices and a glass of sparkling wine.

The love month of February is literally "spiced-up" by Benjarong's rich selections of sumptuous Thai specialties. On Feb. 14, have an intimate dining experience and partake on Benjarong's Valentine Set Menu. Indulge on all of these sumptuous gastronomic delights for only P2,300++ (good for two persons).

From Feb. 16 to 28, sample chef Tun's five a la carte creations for a truly satisfying gastronomic treat.

Benkay's chef Tomiyama shares his passion for fine Japanese cuisine with his specially designed menu creations such as the Tsubaki Set Menu priced at P3,000++ per person and the Ayame Set Menu priced at P2,500++ per person.

Come Feb. 14, Benkay helps you celebrate romance with the special Valentine Dinner Set Menu- a six-course menu perfect for that much-anticipated date on Valentine, for only P1,500++ per person.

Nourish romance and relish passion on Feb. 14 with Thien Duong's Valentine Dinner Set Menu.

On Feb. 16, celebrate "Tet Nguyen Dan" - a traditional Vietnamese New Year feast, only at Thien Duong. Partake on a scrumptious smorgasbord of Vietnamese specialty dishes prepared by Chef Nguyen. Indulge on this special dinner buffet for only P1,200++ per person only.

Awaken romantic moments while enjoying traditional Filipino dishes at Fiesta San Miguel on Valentine's Day with a glass of red or white wine or a 0.3 liter of Fiesta San Miguel's popular fresh brewed beer. Feel extra special with the special gift of Fiesta San Miguel for the ladies.

For inquiries and reservations, please call 867-3333.

Spend a romantic day

FOR THIS VALENTINE SEASON, ENJOY A romantic day at the City Garden Hotel Makati. For only P1,450+ per person on twin-sharing basis enjoy its warm and cozy guest rooms, inclusive of free sumptuous buffet breakfast for two, free use of its open-air swimming pool at the Roof deck and its fully equipped Gym at the Penthouse. Two children below 12 years of age, stay for free.

And if you happen to be looking for a great way to treat your loved one this Feb. 14, reserve a table for two at the Roof deck Bar & Grill. For only P850+ per person, enjoy a romantic dinner surrounded by the city lights of the metropolis.

Those needing extra pampering the Bamboo Spa & Massage at the hotel's Upper Penthouse level have special packages to choose from.

City Garden Hotel Makati is located in Makati's restaurant strip at 7870 Makati Avenue corner Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City. For reservations or inquires, please call (02) 899-1111, or its domestic toll free number 1-800-101-GARDEN (427336), or at www.citygardenhotels.com.

The Bellevue's Valentine promo

CELEBRATE HEART'S DAY IN STYLE AND ELEGANCE with The Bellevue Hotel's Valentine Room Promo from Feb. 12 to 16. For only P4,800++ for deluxe room or P8,200++ for executive suite, make promises of love in the privacy of Bellevue's well-appointed rooms. The promo comes with overnight stay with buffet breakfast for two persons, 1 bottle of sparkling wine, a box of chocolate éclair, free use of gym and swimming pool, welcome fruit platter, two bottles of mineral water, 10 percent discount on food and beverage for lunch and dinner, special rate of P1,400 for a Swedish massage for two persons and 20 percent discount on a Rose Petal Scrub at The Bellevue Spa. Also, treat yourself and your loved one to an evening of timeless classics at The Bellevue Grand Ballroom with "Valentines nAPO with APO Hiking Society." One of the best and most celebrated OPM groups serenades lovers with hits such as "Panalangin," "Pag-ibig," "Yakap sa Dilim," "When I Met You," "Anna," and many more on Feb. 14, 9 p.m. Tickets at P2500 and P2000 net inclusive of one standard drink. Assigned seating sold at the Front Desk only. Plus, let the romance of Valentine's Day linger with The Bellevue Hotel's special post-valentine concert in partnership with 96.3 WRock on Feb. 16, Friday at the 20/20 Entertainment Bar. Featuring the talented group consisting of accomplished musicians and professionals Bert de Leon, Cash Manalang, Roy Marinduque and John Lesaca, Area One will serenade audiences with their one-of-a-kind renditions of Beatles favourites and timeless classics from the fifties to the present. Tickets are at P450 net inclusive of one standard drink. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

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DO YOU EVEN REALIZE THAT Valentine's Day is just a few days away? Save yourself the hassle and bustle of going to a flower shop yourself. Parking might be a nightmare and waiting in line is a waste of your precious time.

Just log on to www.myflowershop.com.ph and you are off to melting her heart from among the site's wide selection of the freshest and most beautiful flowers and other exclusive gift items. With just a few fast and easy clicks, you can send your special someone with a classic bouquet of fresh long stemmed red Holland variety roses or a more extravagant arrangement of large Columbian blooms elegantly wrapped in premium packaging.

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You can even personalize your dedication card with your own words of love; or choose to remain anonymous for secret admirers out there. Impress her even more with the cutest huggable stuffed toys like Bonzo the Boxer or Jasper the Dalmatian hugging a bouquet of fresh roses. And since you are on a roll to becoming a real Valentino, why not throw in a box of sweet chocolate truffles to seal the deal?

You don't have to be a computer wiz or tech-savvy to make an order. At www.myflowershop.com.ph, ordering is as easy as one, two, three. All it takes is a few minutes of your time at the comfort of your office, home or any Internet shop. Best of all, the site is open on-line 24/7 and payment is made simple as www.myflowershop.com.ph accepts most major credit cards or Globe G-cash. Delivery takes only a day or two upon order confirmation.

May it be a trio of fresh Peach Columbian Roses for your best-friend, a refreshing bouquet of Citrus Blooms for your mom or a giant teddy bear hugging a dozen long stemmed roses for your girl, express your love this Valentine's through www.myflowershop.com.ph - the fast, easy and reliable way to express how you truly feel, for real.

Mandarin Oriental's hearty Valentine treats

MANDARIN ORIENTAL, MANILA lays out hearty offerings in its various restaurants and bars, in this season of love.

A special Valentine's dinner buffet awaits diners at Paseo Uno, with the popular restaurant's traditional selections and new offerings at P1,588+++ per person; and at P2,188+++ per person, inclusive of a glass of Moet et Chandon. The hotel's signature fine-dining restaurant The Tivoli, heralds the epitome of romantic dining with a seven-course dinner menu at P3,000+++ per person, inclusive of a glass of Moet et Chandon on Feb. 13, 14, 15. Long-stemmed red roses for the lovely ladies, come with this special Valentine dinner offerings.

At the premier Chinese restaurant Tin Hau, special Valentine dinner set menus are offered at P1,288+++, P1,488+++, and P1,688+++ per person, inclusive of a special take-home Valentine gift.

The Mandarin Deli offers a Valentine's set menu on Feb. 8 to 14, that comes with lovely flowers to give to your loved one; while the MO Café & Deli at Gateway Mall and the Oasis serve up a divine three-course menu complete with a glass of wine at P750++ per person.

For those who swear by flowers as the best expression of one's love, Flowers by Mandarin Oriental has prepared lovely and artistic arrangements in celebration of the day of hearts.

At the premier entertainment place Captain's Bar, the country's pop diva Kuh Ledesma together with young balladeer Erik Santos and multi-awarded singer and songwriter Rey Valera take center stage in a special Valentine concert on Feb. 14. Valentine concert tickets are priced at P3,500 and P2,500.

For details, call the Food and Beverage office at 750 8888 extension 2401, and Room Reservations at extension 2304.

Chocolate rosebuds from Teriyaki Boy

WANT YOUR SUSHI AND VALENTINE'S SWEETness too? Teriyaki Boy delivers both on these most romantic of days. On Feb. 13 and 14, all 27 Teriyaki Boy branches will offer free chocolate rosebuds for every P500 minimum dine-in purchase. At Teriyaki Boy, both the décor and the food give rise to a happy expansive feeling best shared with friends and family. In fact, the restaurant, also known for its warm, courteous and fast service, serves a choice of over 80 delectable Japanese fare suited to Filipino taste and preference. Moreover, Teriyaki Boy's reasonable prices will surprise those who've never had the pleasure of dining in a Teriyaki Boy outlet. Best of all, with 27 restaurants now open, there's a Teriyaki Boy outlet near you. Indeed, with chocolate rosebuds as a special treat, Teriyaki Boy will prove to be the surprising but perfect choice to celebrate love in all its forms - from lovers and spouses to friends and family. Teriyaki Boy Group Inc is a member of the Pancake House Group of Companies.

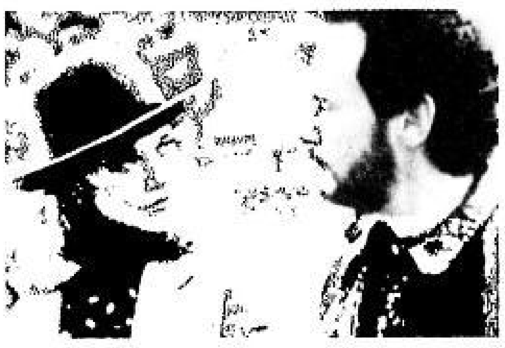
Screen lovers say it with hearts and flowers

By Nestor U. Torre

COUPLE WHO GO ON MOVIE DATES LOVE hearing memorably lush romantic dialogue that strives to express all of the heady, intoxicating shades, scents and flavors of *l'amour*.

Of late, breathless espousals of love on the silver screen have moved into the contemporary lexicon as favorite romantic quotes. They include "You complete me" and "You had me at hello."

Add to those palpitating declarations these profuse and legendary avowals of love in the movies:



RYAN AND CRYSTAL. Play star-crossed pair in "When Harry Met Sally."

Vision

Daniel Day-Lewis to Michelle Pfeiffer in "The Age of Innocence": "You have become the complete vision of all that I have missed!"

Woody Allen to Diane Keaton in "Annie Hall": "Love is too weak a word for the way I feel—I *lurve* you, you know, I *laave* you, I *luff* you!"

Kulle to his lost love, Federspiel, in "Babette's Feast": "I have been with you every day of my life!"

Yul Brynner to Maria Schell in "The Brothers Karamazov": "The only hell is being unable to love!"

Kevin Costner to Susan Sarandon in "Bull Durnham": "I believe in the soul, the dawn, the evening, the small of a woman's back, the sweet spot, soft-core pornography, opening your presents Christmas morning rather than Christmas Eve, and I believe in long, slow deep, soft, wet kisses that last three days!"

LEIGH AND GABLE. Test luck and destiny in "Gone with the Wind."

Katharine Ross to Paul Newman in "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid": "I'm 26 and I'm single and a schoolteacher, and the only excitement I've known is with you. So, I'll go with you, and I won't whine, and I'll sew your socks, and I'll stitch you up when you're wounded, and I'll do anything you ask of me, except one thing: I won't watch you die, I'll miss that scene if you don't mind!"

Greta Garbo to Robert Taylor in "Camille": "How can you change one's life and build a new one in one moment of love? And yet, that's what you make me want to close my eyes and do!"

Hume Cronym to Jessica Tandy in "Cocoon": "I don't want to live forever if you're not going to be with me."

Better man

Ida Lupino to Errol Flynn in "Escape Me Never": "But I don't want a better man, I just want *you!*"

Geena Davis to Jeff Goldblum in "The Fly": "I just want to eat you up. That's why old ladies pinch babies. It's the flesh. It just makes you crazy!"

Ingrid Bergman to Gary Cooper in "For Whom the Bell Tolls": "I don't know how to kiss, or I would kiss you. Where do the noses go?"

Clark Gable to Vivien Leigh in "Gone with The Wind": "In spite of you and me and the whole silly world going to pieces around us, I love you, because we're alike, bad lots both of us, selfish and shrewd, but able to look things in the eyes—and call them by their right names."

Cary Grant to Ingrid Bergman in "Indiscreet": "Don't cry, Anna. I love you. Everything will be all right. You'll like being married, you'll see!"

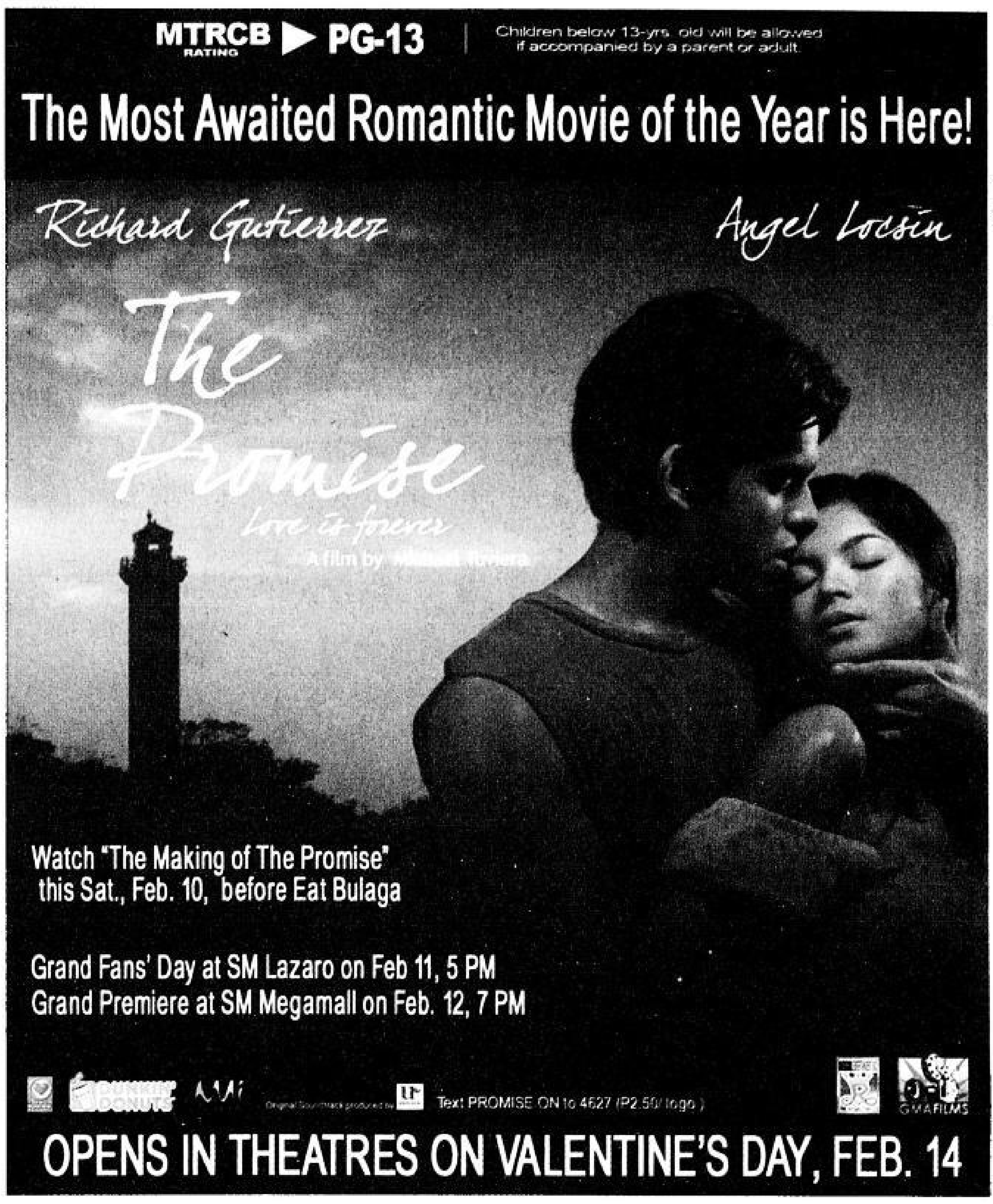
Opposite sexes

Bette Davis to Robert Montgomery in "June Bride": "Carey, you know very well we're perfectly mated—after all, we're opposite sexes!"

Ernest Borgnine to Betsy Blair in "Marty": "Listen, I've been looking for a girl every Saturday

SCREEN/ F4

DICAPRIO AND WINSLET. Breathless avowals of love in "Titanic."



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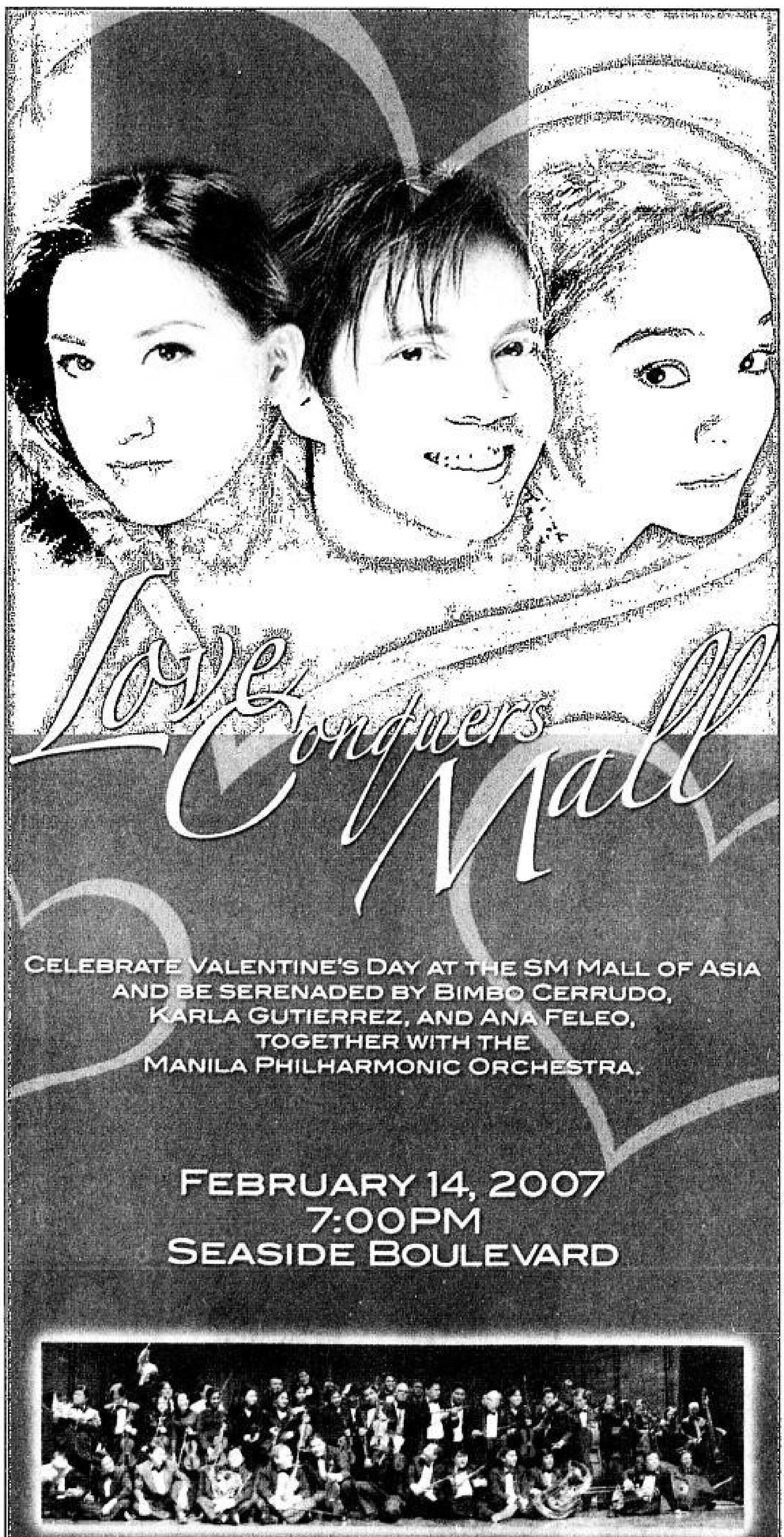

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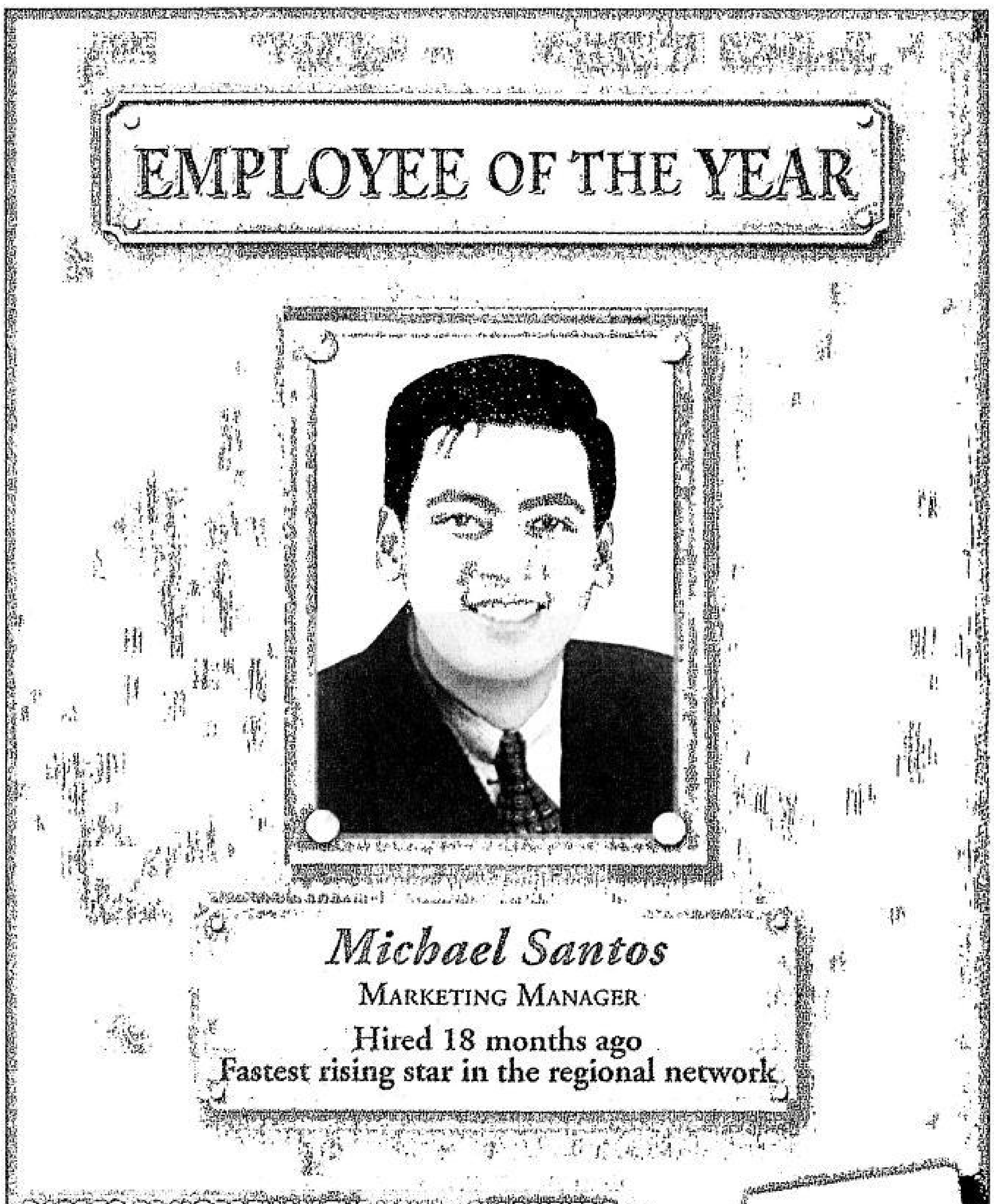

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'Curse' walks fine line between extravagance and kitsch

By Noelani Torre

GONG. Plays maddened empress in Zhang Yimou's latest masterpiece.

WALKING THE FINE LINE BETWEEN grand, extravagant art and kitsch, "Curse of the Golden Flower" may not be director Zhang Yimou's best work, but it's certainly one of his most riveting. It's hard to take your eyes off this vividly rendered film, with its gilded and decadent setting, ornate costumes, and flawlessly choreographed action scenes.

Set in 10th-century China at the close of the Tang Dynasty, the movie focuses on the members of the imperial family who are more bound together by hate and secrets than by love:

The Empress (Gong Li), who's having an affair with her own stepson, Crown Prince Wan (Liu Ye), is being surreptitiously and systematically poisoned at the behest of her husband, the Emperor (Chow Yun Fat).

Poison

In the meantime, Prince Wan is also having an affair with the Imperial doctor's daughter (Li Man), who personally serves the poison to the Empress in the guise of medicine.

The Empress does not intend to go down without a fight and is brewing a plot to avenge herself on her husband who, in turn, is wily enough to hatch a counterplot.

Meanwhile, second son, Prince Jai (Jay Chou), returns home after spending a few years defending the borders, and youngest son, Prince Yu (Qin Junjie), lurks about in the background, biding his time.

Incest, treachery, disloyalty, ambition, love and hate are all woven together in this extravagantly told tale—it has the makings of a Greek or Shakespearean tragedy, or a grand opera, though the film bears a greater resemblance to the latter in all its overwrought glory.

It can be exhausting to watch—especially when more elements like the clash of two great armies, rope-swinging black-clad *ninja*-ish warriors, and the mystery surrounding the Emperor's first wife are added to the mix.

A lot of the credit goes to the elaborate setup and the striking cinematography, but the actors contribute a great deal, as well. The inimitable Gong Li is at her best, a maddened queen who nonetheless fights tooth and claw against her role as a victim.

Gong's acting is big and stylized, as though she were onstage and not onscreen. In another movie, this would have been farcical, but the attack is just right for the material. After all, she has to compete with all the visual splendor surrounding her.

Intensity

Likewise, Chow Yun Fat radiates an intensity that makes him equally magnetic. His Emperor is heartless, cunning, and scarily charming. You can sense the suppressed emotion underneath his seemingly smooth veneer. Together, he and Gong make for a deadly combination.

As blood spatters dramatically on golden chrysanthemum flowers, you'll see just how lethal they are. A lot of blood is spilled when royalty bicker among themselves.

But when all the mayhem is over, there are thousands of servants to clean up the carnage, spread fresh carpets, and replace the bloodied chrysanthemums with fresh ones!

Remembering Lino Brocka

By Behn Cervantes

BROCKA. His films depicted the plight of the misbegotten.

"BEFORE HE BECAME A FILM director in 1970, Lino Brocka was a Mormon missionary in Hawaii," I informed my class.

My students responded with a rather glazed look. "You know Lino, of course...? As in Lino Brocka?," I pursued, a bit irked that the "hope of the fatherland" showed little awareness of and appreciation for the name.

Lino and I had been friends since 1956. We became members of the UP Dramatic Club under National Artist for Drama Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero, along with the likes of Joonee Gamboa, George Sison, Pinky Rigor, Donnie Montelibano and, yes, Joma Sison.

Differences

Lino and I had a falling out in 1969..But, by 1984, we had worked out our differences when we organized an artists' group after the assassination of Ninoy Aquino in 1983. Lino was also awarded the National Artist and the Ramon Magsaysay awards for his brave films that depicted the plight of the misbegotten.

I realized: "Hey, Lino died in 1991—it's now 2007!" If the sophomores' average age is 18, they would have been merely two years old at the time of his demise!

In fact, when students were asked to cite some of Lino's films, one of them answered, "Oro, Plata, Mata," a great film that was really directed by Peque Gallaga. The student meant "Ora Pro Nobis," of course.

Visceral connection

If contemporary students steeped in entertainment no longer have a visceral connection to Lino, how could they appreciate the contributions of Claro M. Recto, Lorenzo Tañada, José Diokno, Ambrosio Padilla or Jovito Salonga? At mcst, those great statesmen would merely be names in their history classes.

However, knowing them and appreciating their worth in the context of their time would be difficult to students today, since education these days gives little importance to our history.

Therefore, the Sadeka Foundation, an organization made up of former members of the Samahan Demokratiko ng Kabataan, is sponsoring "Paggugunita, Lino" at 2 p.m. today at the Bantayog ng Mga Bayani on Edsa cor. Quezon blvd.

Legendary

I will trace Brocka's days at UP and Edsa I. Gina Alajar will share how it was working with the legendary director. Menggie Cobarrubias, who received an Urian best supporting actor trophy for his performance in Brocka's "Jaguar," will likewise reminisce about Lino. A screening of "Ora Pro Nobis" will follow.

The program, conceptualized by Sadeka headed by Dr. Jepee Perez, will be highlighted by musical numbers featuring tenor Dondi Ong and the poems of *Ka* Amado, which will be recited by Meilyn Palarca Papa and Susan Macabuag.

All who wish to recall Brocka's artistic and nationalistic contributions are welcome!

Screen lovers say it with hearts and flowers

From page F3

night of my life. I'm 34 years old—I'm just tired of looking, that's all."

Blair to Borgnine: "I know that, when you take me home, I'm just going to lie in bed and think of you."

Jean Arthur to James Stewart in "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington": "Diz says I'm in love with you. —He's right!"

Perfect

Nicolas Cage to Cher in "Moonstruck": "We aren't here to make things perfect. The stars are perfect, not us. We are here to ruin ourselves and to break our hearts and to love the wrong people and die."

Priscilla Presley to Leslie Nielsen in "The Naked Gun": I've loved you since the first day I met you, and I'll never stop. I'm a very lucky woman.

Nielsen: "So am I."

James Stewart to Katharine Hepburn in "The Philadelphia Story": "There's a magnificence in you, Tracy—a magnificence that comes out of your eyes and your voice and the way you stand there and the way you walk. You're lit from within, Tracy. You've got fires banked down in you, hearth fires and holocausts!"

In "My Best Friend's Wedding," Julia Roberts' character pleads, "Michael, I've loved you for nine years, but I've been too arrogant and scared to realize it. Well, now I'm just scared. So, I realize this comes at a very inopportune time, but I really have this gigantic favor to ask of you: Choose me. Marry me!"

Leonardo DiCaprio's character in "Titanic": "You must do me this honor, Rose: Promise me you'll survive. That you won't give up no matter what happens! Promise me now, Rose, and never let go of that promise!"

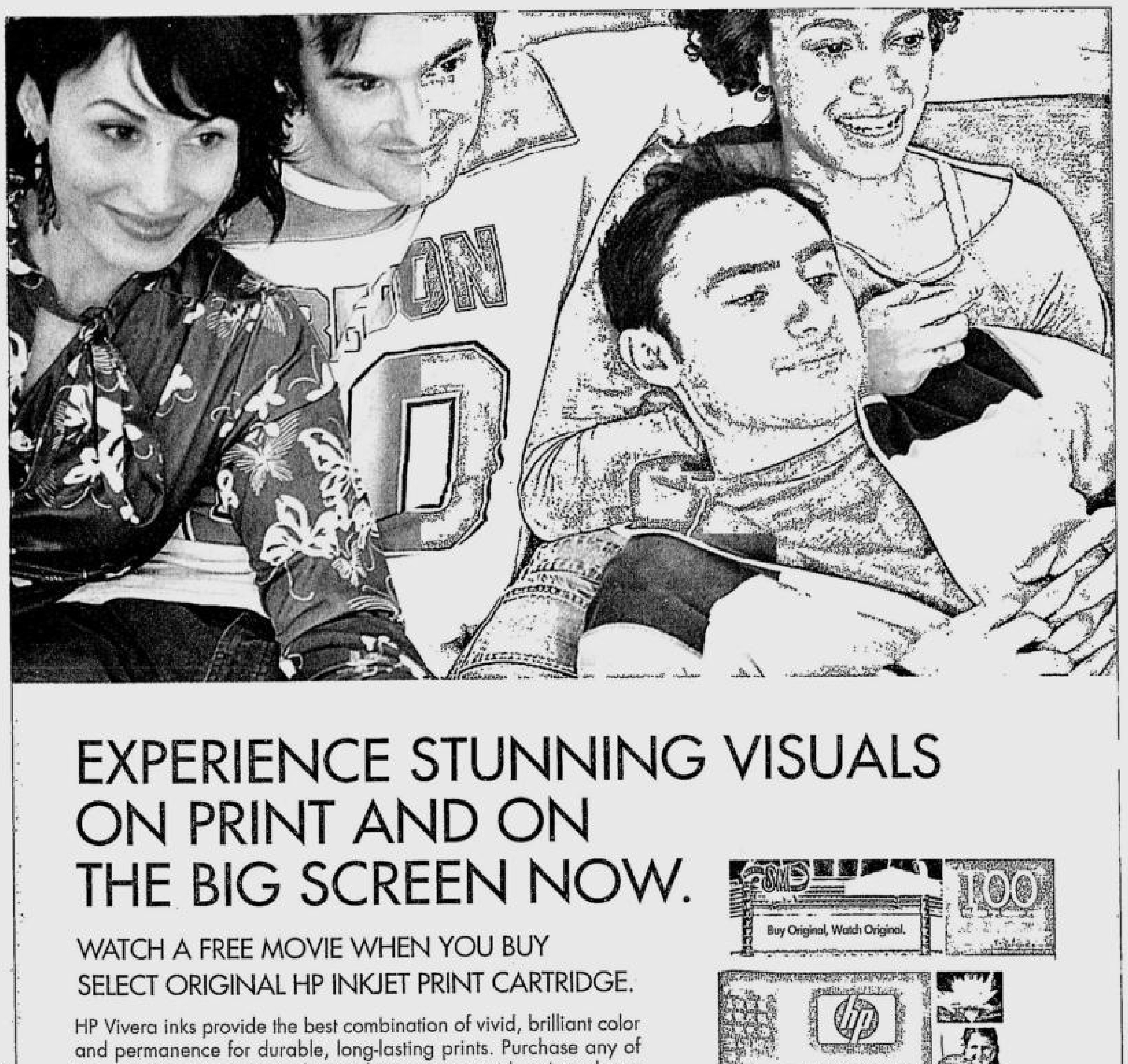
Kim Novak in "Vertigo": "It wasn't supposed to happen this way. But, if you lose me, you'll know I loved you, and I wanted to go on loving you."

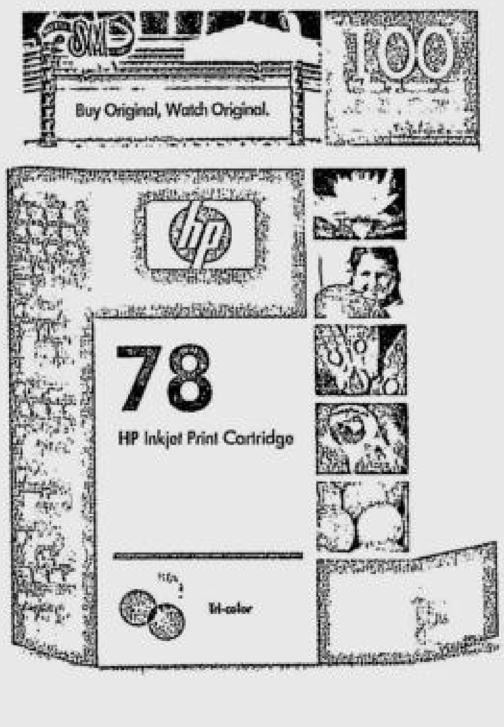
Last person

Billy Crystal in "When Harry Met Sally": "I love that it takes you an hour and a half to order a sandwich. I love that you get a little crinkle in your nose when you look at me like I'm nuts. I love that after I spend a day with you, I can still smell your perfume on my clothes. And I love that you are the last person I want to talk to before I go to sleep at night!"

Nicolas Cage in "Moonstruck": "Love doesn't make things nice, it ruins everything. It breaks your heart, it makes things a mess! We aren't here to make things perfect, we're here to ruin ourselves and break our hearts and love the wrong people and die! Now, I want you to come upstairs with me and get in my bed."

LEA AT REBIRTH
"I underwent lactation massage and I am very happy with it," Ms Lea Salonga says about the services available at ReBirth Spa Salon and Barber at the Asian Hospital and Medical Center (AHMC) in Alabang, Muntinglupa City. Salonga cut the ribbon, formally launching ReBirth's first outlet, and is shown flanked by obstetrician and gynecologist, Dr. Rebecca B. Singson, with her twins, Gia and Gio.





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Per DTI-NCR Permit No 5359, Series of 2006

SATURDAY *Special*

Love is in the air—and on the movie screen

By Nestor U. Torre

"SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE." Young boy turns matchmaker to find himself a new mother.

VALENTINE'S DAY 2007 HAS ITS FILMIC component in new love-oriented movies now showing or coming soon to theaters: "Music and Lyrics," starring Hugh Grant and Drew Barrymore; "The Holiday," with Cameron Diaz, Jude Law, Kate Winslet and Jack Black, "The Promise," with Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin, and "Ask the Dust" with Colin Farrell and Salma Hayek.

Which of these romantic films will click with viewers during this month of love—and

LOVE/ G2

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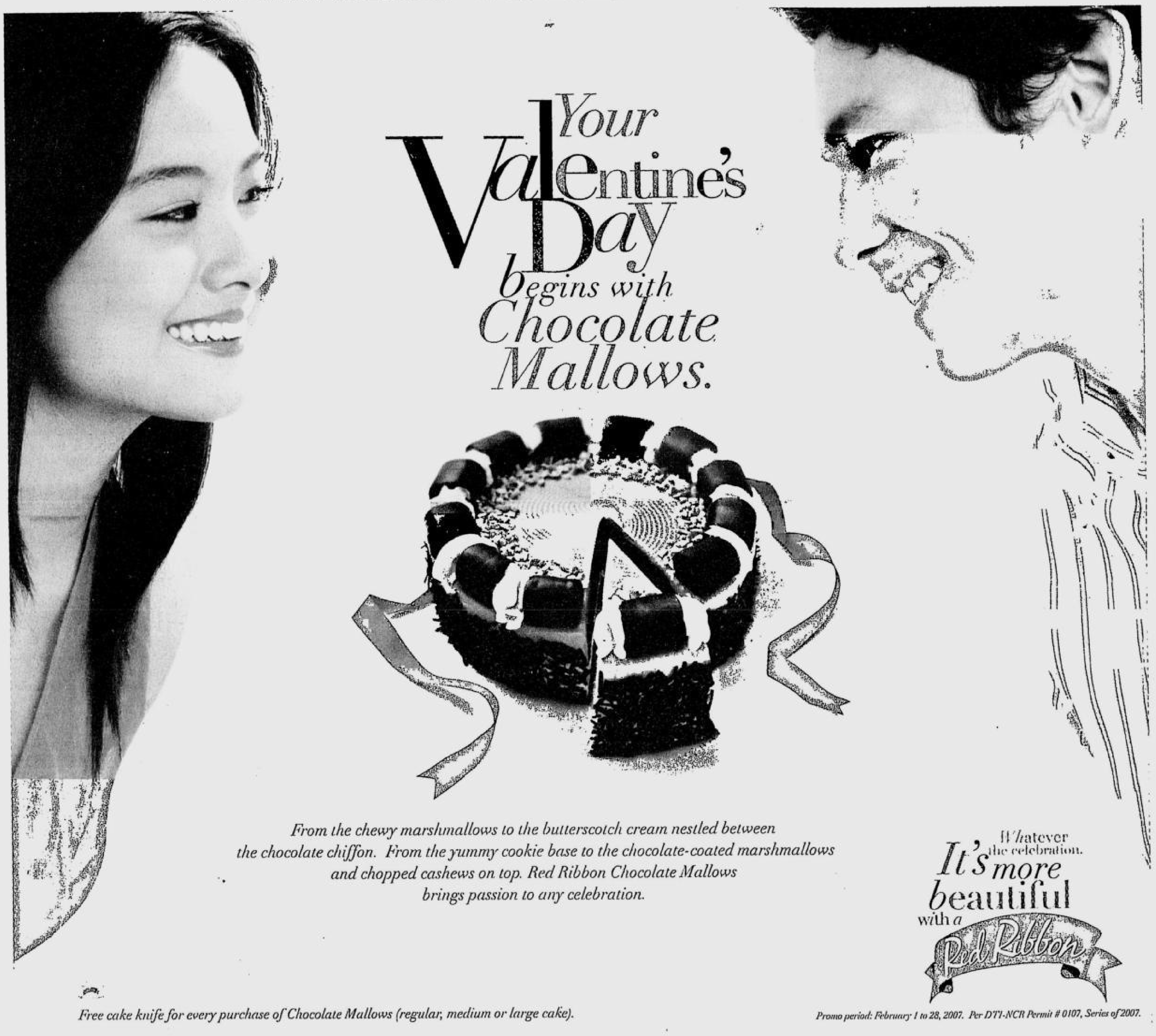
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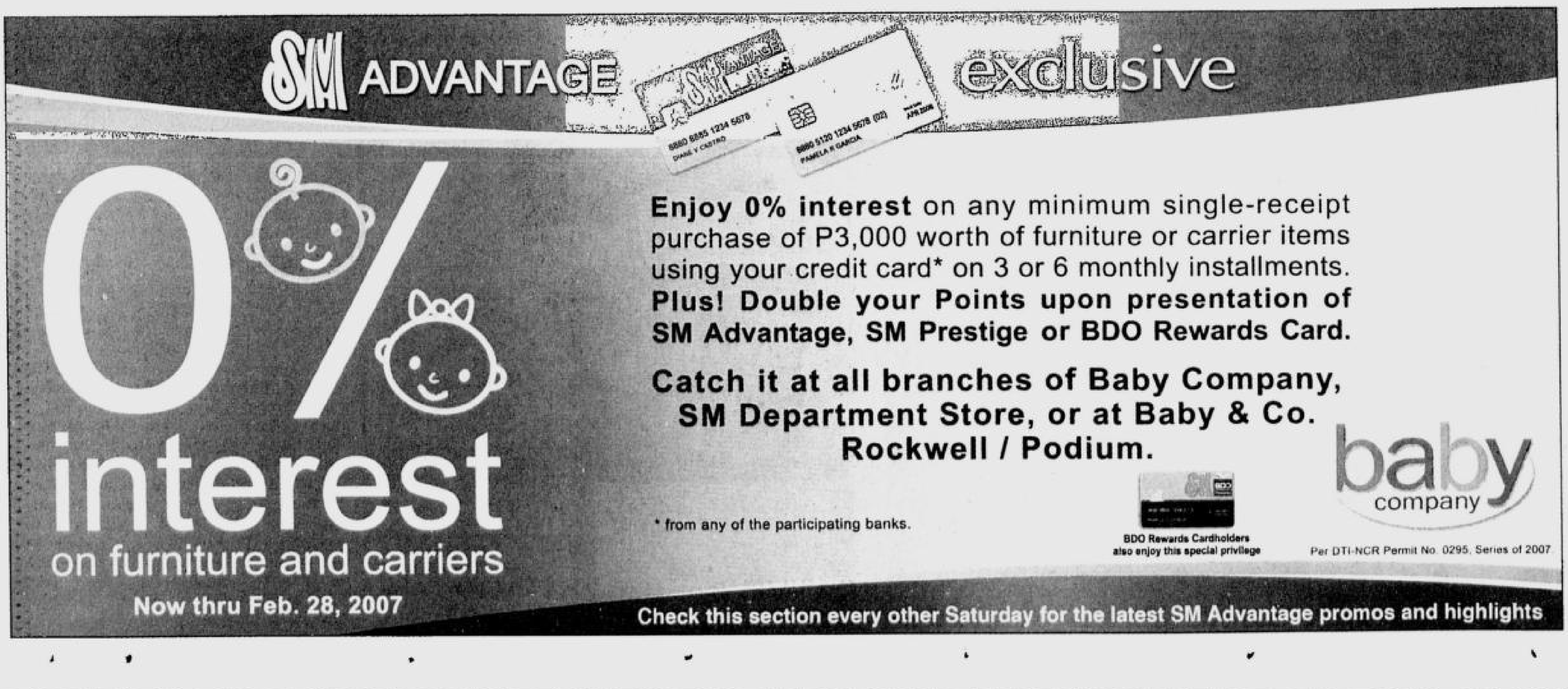
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0295, Series of 2007

Check this section every other Saturday for the latest SM Advantage promos and highlights

My brother Gary

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

TODAY, I AM SAYING GOODBYE TO MY brother Gary after his remains are brought to the Los Baños Cemetery. I was informed that he was diagnosed with carcinoma of the liver last Jan. 27.

Immediately, I asked for a copy of his laboratory tests and inquired from Dr. Cirilo P. Chan, a liver specialist, to explain what those medical terms meant. He said there was nothing we could do but give Gary nutritious food. Medicines would only overwork his liver.

Six brothers

I grew up with six brothers. Aside from Gary, there's Victor Jr. (who passed away in 2002), baseball man Hector, agricultural scientist Nestor, farm operator Ador, and Ding (who manufactures Indiana Jones-type vests for politicians. Call 0910 407-2085).

As a kid, Gary had the misfortune of being dragged by a carabao gone berserk. The incident stunted his growth. In his teenage years, we called him Shirley Temple because he grew his thick, curly hair shoulder-length.

GARY Navasero thrived in the dried flower business.

Despite being unable to finish college, Gary thrived in the dried flower business, specializing in dried woodrose, wild mushrooms, twigs and blooms. He painted them with colors of the rainbow. So, when he married Delia Sales, the GaryDel Dried Flowers and Bonsai was born. They have seven children.

Causes and cures

However, Gary loved drinking with his hometown buddies. While I was trying to learn about the causes and cures of liver disorders and helped prepare his veggies and fruits diet, he was rapidly losing weight.

The last time I visited Gary, ReBirth Spa sent a therapist to administer foot detox, a process which is said to neutralize free radicals.

But, we weren't able to conduct the procedure that night because of his fragile condition. A priest administered the last rites. In his final hour, we promised to look after his family.

Symptoms of liver disorder develop very slowly. In its early stages, it includes constipation or diarrhea, fever, upset stomach, fatigue, weakness, poor appetite, generalized itching,

MY BROTHER/ G7

Carla Guevara returns to the theater in unique musical

By Edmund L. Sicam

AFTER A FIVE-YEAR ABSENCE FROM the theater scene, Carla Guevara-Laforteza is back in Repertory Philippines' staging of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Song and Dance," which opened last night at Onstage in Greenbelt, Makati. Part One of the musical, "Tell Me On a Sunday," revolves around Emma, a *promdi* English girl, who moves to New York to find success and love. Part Two, "Variations," tells the story of Joe, Emma's lover, who leaves her, then goes back to her in the end.

What's unique about this musical, directed by Joy Virata and choreographed by Douglas Nierras, is that Part One is sung through (featuring 19 songs), with only one character (Carla) performing onstage. Part Two is told in dance by Joe (Danny Marshall) and seven other dancers from Powerdance.

Flourishing career

Carla, who had made a name for herself in theater in the '90s, interrupted her flourishing career in 2001 to fly to New York for a college degree. Surprisingly, the actress took up Hotel Operations and Management at New York University—a big turnaround for someone who spent eight years of her life with Rep in such musicals as "Camelot," "Once on This Island," "Annie" and "South Pacific."

She was also an understudy for Kim in the London production of "Miss Saigon." After two years in London, she came home ("I got tired doing the same role over and over again.") and entered the world of movies and television, winning the PMPC Star Award for best new artist for television in 2000.

Carla explains why she went back to school: "I did not want to go to college—I was more interested in acting. I moved to San Agustin, which was more supportive of my love for theater. Then, I started appearing in Rep productions at the age of 15.

GUEVARA. Determined to make her homecoming truly eventful.

Degree

"After high school, I wanted to pursue acting in earnest. However, my father was insistent that I get a degree as a fallback. I resisted. Back in 1993, he and I were watching 'Miss Saigon' on Broadway. During one of Kim's important scenes, I told my dad, 'That's going to be me!'"

True enough, a year later, the headstrong actress was onstage in London as Kim. Her dad was very proud of her performance, but he exacted a promise from Carla that she would get her college degree (for hotel and operations management).

After a year in New York, Carla made a major decision: She got married to Godfrey Laforteza, whom she met on the set of "Little Mermaid," where he was one of the dancers. While Godfrey was in the US, he took up a course in Culinary Arts and later, managed to land a job as a chef at Nobu, a prestigious restaurant chain owned by Robert de Niro.

Developments

Because of these developments (and the birth of their two children), Carla was unable to fulfill her plan of coming back to the Philippines to resume her acting career. Her frustration began to affect her marriage. "I cried a lot," she recalls. "We would fight all the time. I would tell him, 'You know why I'm always *masungit*? This is not me!'"

Then, her prayers were answered. When she heard that Nobu was opening a branch in Hong Kong, she asked her husband to apply for a transfer.

So, late last year, they moved to Hong Kong, and Carla decided to come home and ask around if any auditions were going on. Her cousin, Robbie Guevara, a Rep mainstay, told her about "Song and Dance."

Five actresses had been invited, but on audition day, only Carla showed up! After singing "Tell Me on a Sunday," she got the part on the spot—and they started rehearsing on the same day!

Appearing alone onstage in a musical for a whole hour and singing 19 songs is a big challenge for Carla. But, she's undaunted by the difficult task. She's determined to make her homecoming to the theater a truly eventful one.

"Song and Dance" runs until March 4. Call 887-0710, or TicketWorld at 891-9999.

Love is in the air . . .

From page G1

GRANT AND KERR. Broke hearts in "An Affair to Remember.

after? A recent survey of love film buffs revealed these most-loved movies, which continue to be viewed and re-viewed for many seasons of heartfelt romance:

Matchmaker

"Sleepless in Seattle." The favorite romantic comedy of many respondents, this Tom Hanks-Meg Ryan starrer is uniquely appealing because it makes use of a young Cupid (Hank's son) who turns matchmaker to find himself a new mother.

"An Affair to Remember." Senior movie lovers cite the 1957 version starring Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr for its lush romanticism and "race against time" finale.

"Breathless." Art film buffs love Jean-Luc Godard's 1959 movie starring Jean-Paul Delmondo, who is accompanied by an American girl (Jean Sebeng) as he runs away from the police.

"Two for the Road." A bittersweet road movie about a marriage gone wrong, remembered in wryly loving flashbacks by Albert Finney and Audrey Hepburn.

Speaking of Hepburn, her earlier movies like **"Sabrina," "Roman Holiday"** and **"War and Peace"** are similarly cited for their memorable love quotient.

Enduring

"Gone with the Wind" is another enduring love story, this time set against the epic backdrop of the US Civil War. Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable star.

"Camille," starring the luminous and mysterious Greta Garbo, continues to keep viewers spellbound.

HEPBURN. Utterly lovable in "Sabrina" and "Roman Holiday."

"War of the Roses" takes an ornery, cantankerous look at love, but is still regarded as a paean to romance—no matter how cockeyed. Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner star.

"When Harry Met Sally." Also ornery, this film by Rob Reiner is about two fast friends (Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan) who struggle *not* to fall in love, for fear of ruining their great friendship! Full of knowing remarks about how men and women view each other..

Evanescent tale

"La Strada." Federico Fellini directs Anthony Quinn and Giulietta Massina in this uniquely evanescent tale about a different kind of love among society's outcasts.

Other well-loved movies steeped in romance include **"Raintree Country," "Sunflower," "Love Story," "Casablanca," "The Way We Were," "Intermezzo," "The Bridges of Madison County," "The French Lieutenant's Woman," "The Remains of the Day," "Tender is the Night," "A Certain Smile," "Moulin Rouge," "Bonjour Tristesse," "Wuthering Heights," "Splendor in the Grass," "Magnificent Obsession," "The Goodbye Girl," "Pride and Prejudice," "A Farewell to Arms," "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "Heaven Can Wait," "Pretty Woman," "Places in the Heart," "The Rose," "Cyrano de Bergerac"**—!

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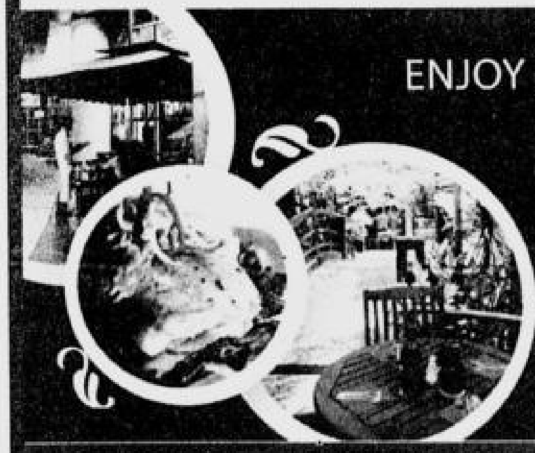

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THE MESSENGERS PG13 2:30,4:30,6:30, 8:30,10:30	CODE NAME: THE CLEANER PG13 2:00,4:00,6:00, 8:00,10:00	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30
CHARLOTTE'S WEB G 5:10 APOCALYPTO R18 7:30,10:20	HANNIBAL RISING R18 2:50,5:20,7:50,10:20	THE HOLIDAY PG13 1:55,4:45,7:35,10:25

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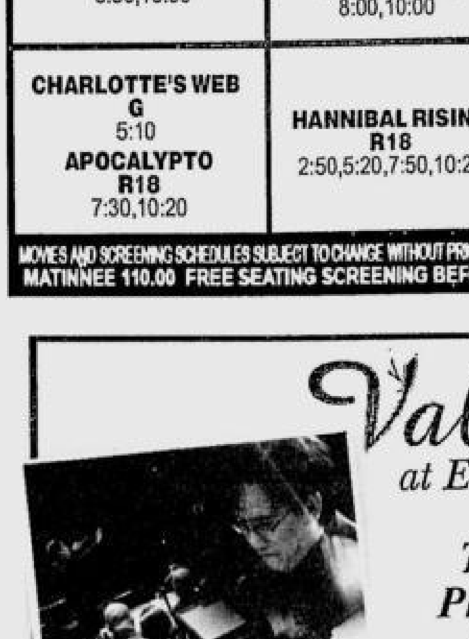

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1	HANNIBAL RISING 2:45, 5:40, 8:25, 11:05 R-18	
2	THE HOLIDAY 2:20, 5:20, 8:20, 11:10 PG-13	
3	APOCALYPTO 2:20, 5:20 R-18	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 8:30, 11:00 G
4	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER 12:55, 3:20, 5:55, 8:30, 11:00 PG-13	

'Compound' director leaves lucrative job to follow a dream

By Rica Arevalo

I FIRST SAW WILL FREDO, THE director of the digital indie, "Compound," carrying a TV set by his lonesome at Robinsons Galleria's cinema lobby. He was setting it up to show his trailer. He was also handing out flyers to passers-by—a one-man team doing everything to promote the theatrical run of his film.

When we sat down for this interview, he touched my hand to let me know how nervous he was—his hands were freezing!

Before the film bug hit him, Will was a successful computer programmer based in Seattle, USA.

FREDO. IT's loss is cinema's gain.

Practical

"*Bata pa ako*, I was already interested in filmmaking," he shares. "But being a Filipino living in the States, I knew I had to be practical—*kailangang magtrabaho!* I couldn't use the 'artistic' side of my brain."

But, during a three-month sabbatical from his work at Microsoft, he went to New York to study film. "When I returned, I quit my job. Now, I'm a full-time filmmaker, that's why *ako ang nagbubuhat ng TV*," he laughs.

How did "Compound" come to life? He relates: "I came back to the Philippines not to make a movie, but to help a family member who was going through problems involving drug abuse and paranoia.

Idea

At the time, news stories about terrorists and their activities were rampant—there were kidnappings and bombings. That's when the idea for the film came to me."

After being inspired by Robert Rodriguez's book on how to make a low-budget indie film, Fredo convinced friends and family to support his film financially. Thank God for credit cards, he also used them for his "cause."

He enjoyed working with his actors, John Arcilla, Janet Russ, Liza Diño, Lily Chu and Jake Macapagal. "I love my actors! They all auditioned. I told them, *"Kahit sabihin n'yong taga-*States *ako, maliit lang ang bayad dito, ha?"*"

So, why should people watch his movie at IndieSine (which is screening "Compound" until Feb. 13)? "I'm hoping that people will see this as a venue for interaction. They'll see me outside the theater, ready to discuss my learning experiences on the film with people who care to listen!"

What love really means

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

WHAT DOES "LOVE" MEAN? What can we learn from its four letters?

L means learning whom to love. Learn who you are and whom you're relating to. A person is a non-material being only temporarily made up of flesh and blood. Learn to see beyond a person's facial features, the type of hairstyle he wears, or the brand of jeans he buys. Man is a beautiful spark from God that exists in a material body.

Unconditional

Each person has weaknesses and shortcomings. He's not omniscient, omnipresent or omnipotent. Don't expect him to be there everytime you miss him, to understand how you feel all the time.

The less you expect from an imperfect being, the less frustrated you get.

What we need to learn is to love the real Beloved. His love is perfect, unconditional and eternal. When we have a relationship with the Supreme Beloved, we have a foundation for a peaceful and joyful existence.

You can rest in a loving relationship where there's no fear, exploitation or pain. In real love, there's caring, devotion and joy.

O means offering. In love, there's giving and nurturing. It means having the other person's well-being in mind, and doing what is beneficial for other living entities. It's a soul to soul relationship, not body to body.

We go beyond material activity such as physical or sexual interaction. Understanding that physical and sexual engagements are superficial and temporary, the soul seeks higher happiness on the spiritual plane, where pleasure and joy last.

Enthusiasm

V means vital. Love gives us the enthusiasm to do what pleases the Supreme and all His children. The relationship becomes active and dynamic, where a person's purpose in life is to render meaningful service that benefits everyone. Love motivates a man to take great sacrifices in the hope of alleviating the suffering of others.

Pleasure

E means enjoyment. There's natural joy in serving with love. When we serve the Supreme Person with loving devotion, He reciprocates with transcendental pleasure.

Real love is not superficial. It's the living being's most valuable possession. Offer it to someone who can nurture it.

Giving your heart to the Supreme Beloved puts us in a secure position in life. We can rest in such a loving relationship where there's no fear or doubt—only contentment and happiness.

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CINEMA 5 THE HOLIDAY 10:40 , 1:35 , 4:30 7:25 , 10:20 PG-13
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Feb 7 & 8 , 2007	Agot Isidro "Back to Basics"	8:30 PM
Feb 09 , 2007	BIMBO CERRUDO " TONIGHT MY LOVE"	8:30 PM
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Feb 16 & 17 , 2007	Passion Y Fuego	8:00 PM

TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00 PM
Feb 06 & 20 , 2007	DYORDS KO PO	8:30 PM
February 11 , 2007	LOVI POE "A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION"	9:00 PM
Feb 13 & 14 , 2007	RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:30 PM

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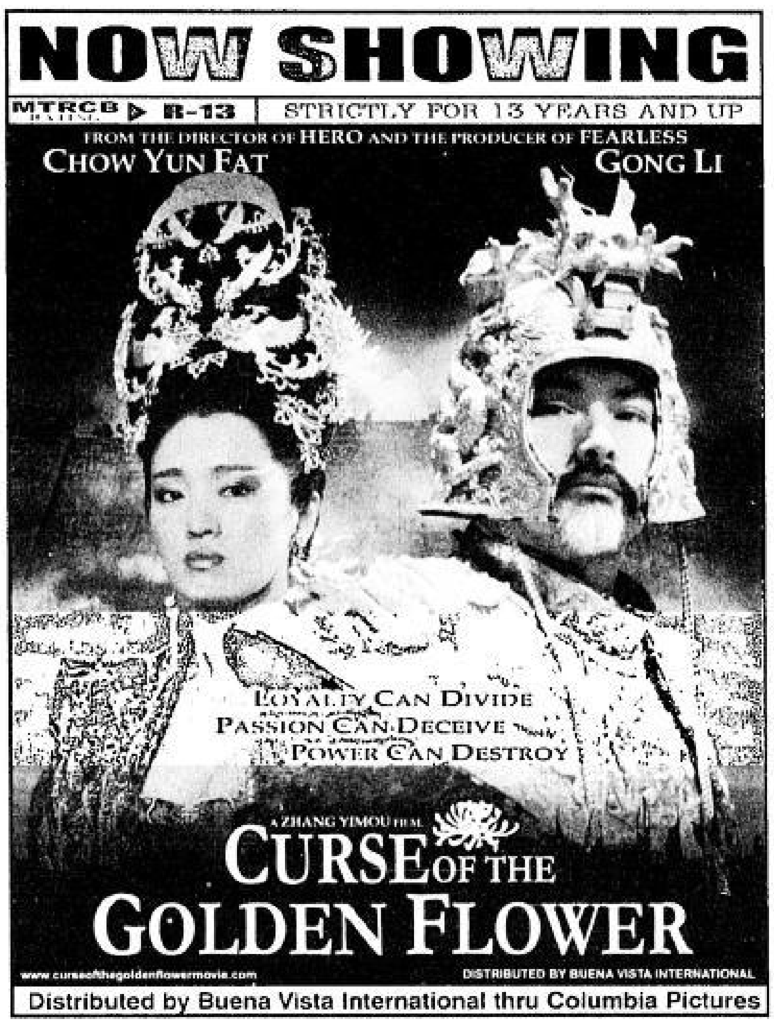

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE CLEANER	2 THE HOLIDAY	3 HANNIBAL RISING	4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 NIGHT AT HE MUSEUM	2 THE MESSENGERS	3 THX HANNIBAL RISING GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE HISTORY BOYS	5 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER	6 THE HOLIDAY	7 APOCALYPTO
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 APOCALYPTO	2 THE HOLIDAY		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE MESSENGERS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE HOLIDAY GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 THE HISTORY BOYS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HANNIBAL RISING GUARANTEED SEATS	5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE HOLIDAY GUARANTEED SEATS	2 HANNIBAL RISING		
	3 THE MESSENGERS	4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER	5 ARTHUR & THE INVISIBLES	
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M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE HOLIDAY	2 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER		
	3 THE CLEANER	4 HANNIBAL RISING	5 THE MESSENGERS	

At the Activity Center

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GREENBELT — Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peak presents: Collection of Ana Rocha
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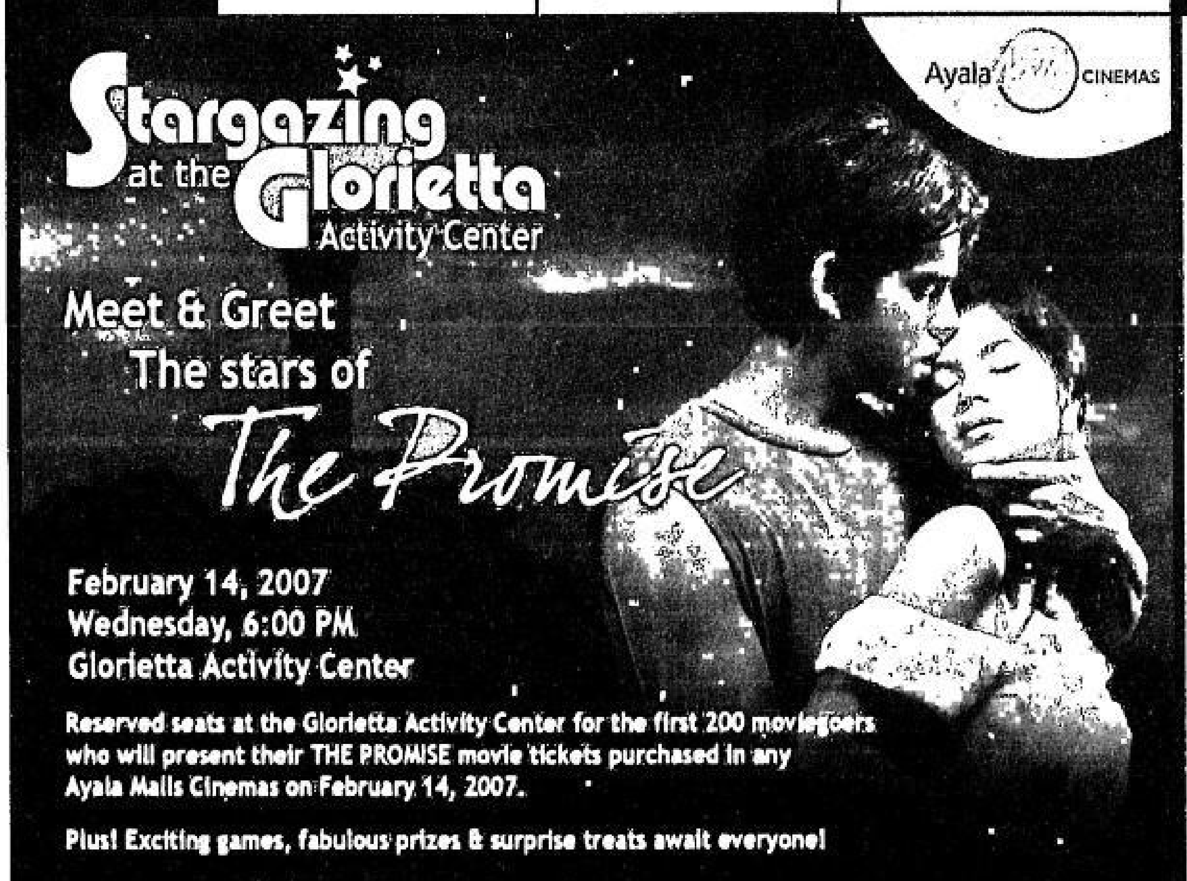

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GMA FILMS glorietta

Ayala Malls
FUN AND FORTUNE WITH PORKY PIG AT THE AYALA MALLS
Meet and Greet Porky Pig
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Alabang Town Center Activity Center February 11 11am, 3pm & 6pm
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KUNG HEI FAT CHOI!
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time to indulge at Shang's i

A new level of sophistication can now be found literally at Shangri-la Plaza's newest fashion attraction, Indulgences, the ultimate fashion destination at the mall's level 3.

Indulgences, which is a cluster of A-list shops and stores, is for discriminating shoppers who want to add the needed zest and pizzazz into their lifestyles,

Offering an array of lifestyle options from some of the world's most well known brands, Indulgences offers the latest day and evening ensembles, from apparel to footwear, jewelry, beauty and personal care.

"Indulgences is all about who we are and the guiltless pleasures and delightful rewards that we deserve. With all our favorite shops integrated in one level, shopping has been made so much easy and enjoyable," says Lala Fojas, Shangri-La Plaza's EVP and general manager.

Among the esteemed labels that bring life to Indulgences are Anna Pashmina, Anne Klein, Armani Exchange, Boss Hugo Boss, Burberry, Cole Haan, Episode, Escada, Fino, Furla, Guess, Homme et Femme, Kenneth Cole, Laurel, Mango, Marks & Spencer, Mico Boutique, M)Phosis, Nine West, Paul Smith, St. John and Tint; along with personal care line Gasswell-Massey, lifestyle store Felicity, jewelry outlets like Vanafi, K Velayo, Simply Gold, and optical stop by J. Viñas.

Complementing this already formidable lineup of big names and known labels in the fashion

Celebrating style at Debenhams

The choices only got better and better for the fashion-savvy with the entry of Debenhams, a UK brand that recently invaded the Philippines.

There are a number of reasons people should celebrate the opening of Debenhams' first-ever outlet at the Indulgences at the Shangri-La Plaza. For one, it has made shopping easy for the whole family because the products and collection range from men's and women's clothes to kids and babywear. And because it boasts of its own 50 in-house brands, quality will never be a question.

Debenhams is a byword among the world's finest and is one of the best international retailers of clothing, fashion accessories, cosmetics, and even homeware.

For people who are particular with brand quality and price, the store showcases its own notable brands that include: Red Herring for those who go for casual directional clothing. It has everything you need for men, women, and children. Women and girls will surely enjoy trying out a fun range of exclusive sports or loungewear from Pineapple. If you still can't get enough of that, Tigerlily gives girls more choices to be always in fashion. Sports have become a part of every Filipino's life, so go for Maine New England for that performance-enhanced clothing for the whole family. And the little ones? They are not to be left out with such cutesy designer brands like Casual Club, J Taylor, Debut, and Babbleboom.

Adding to the long list of Debenhams' well-loved products is a list of 41 brands created by 19 in-house designers. These designers collections include J by Jasper Conran, Butterfly by Matthew Williamson, Star by Julien Macdonald, Rocha by John Rocha, St. George by Duffer, Betty Jackson. Black, Antoni & Alison, Elie by Elie Tahari, and Reger by Janet Reger.

Apart from all these, Debenhams has its home section offering an extensive range of towels and bed linen for that added posh right in your own private space.

Because Debenhams is able to marry quality and reasonable price, there is no reason one should not drop by the 17,000 square feet store in Shangri-La Plaza. Whatever you are looking for -- men's and women's day or evening wear, kids or baby stuff, or even homeware - you'll find it at Debenhams.

Liz Claiborne gives you the right choices

The timeless pieces of Liz Claiborne make it one of the most sought-after brands among women.

It has been three decades since Liz Claiborne saved women from becoming fashion victims. Far from being mediocre, it has provided enticing, full lifestyle collections that address women's work, play and fashion needs with quality and versatility.

Liz Claiborne has maintained its quiet elegance and continues to define the look of the modern woman. The premier ladies' fashion line makes sure there is always something for every woman -- petite or plus size.

Fashion is all about balance and silhouette so details are quiet and discreet. Choose from the diverse collection of silk charmeuse blouses, velvet floor-length skirts, and tunics to create a soft and very feminine style. Adjusting to a more subdued office wardrobe, Liz Claiborne opts for neutrals, white, black, and grey. The rich leather and suede fabrics make for a comfortable day ensemble, in as much as luxurious velvet and satin are perfect for an evening affair. These are signature styles that dress up every glam girl's a.m. to p.m. life.

Classic but never old, dressy yet sensible, Liz Claiborne has created a fashion line that women are guaranteed to love.

Laundry by Shelli Segal redefines mod versatility

Busy, sophisticated women dress up for the occasion. So it's no wonder that they opt for dresses that can be worn for business presentations in the morning and social gatherings in the evening. For whatever function it may be, changing outfits take time. And that's why, in this fast-paced world, versatility is always an edge.

Laundry at the Shang is the perfect shop for these women and has introduced a versatile clothing line. Personality and mood can change in a snap, so should a dress, right?

Laundry has infused feminine touches in a myriad of modernized details utilizing an array of colors and lush fabrics, flattering cuts and shapes, as well as distinctive designs that radiates confidence. The combination of these elements spills into each piece creating an array of striking ensembles, such as the sharp double-knit shorts suit; its contour and comfort cut through the line between day and evening, work and casual.

Whatever the cut or design is, each piece adds grace to the feminine form -- sophisticated, easy to wear, and most importantly, in vogue.

Add some sexiness and toughed-up rock n' roll with easy shapes and skinny pants to the traditional details of beaded, bloused, and lace dress. If you're into jackets, find the modernized pieces with distinct details like bejeweled closures and velvety puffed sleeves.

Warmer days are slowly creeping in, and cool blouses made of loose fabric are going to take center stage. Feeling sexier? A soft strapless bubble dress and tulle dress gives you that feminine charm in its shape, beading, and illusion.

With Laundry, creating that smart, edgy look is effortless, making sure that you march forward feeling confident and strong -- day in or out.

Sexy, ve
at V

Here's a store that
heart what women really
up by women for wom
Rose is a chic lingerie s
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it could ever be.

A sanctuary for wome
constantly on the look o
perfect pair, Velvet Ros
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basic and push ups, pa
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all that sexy sweet lace a
colors of pinks, reds and
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Anette Carranceja a
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makes women comforta
time, Anette says, wom
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At Velvet Rose, wome
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It will make us proud
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"Velvet Rose is a sho
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"Velvet Rose listens,
Shower Registry, somet
ing," they added with a w

This makes Velvet Ro
criminating taste.

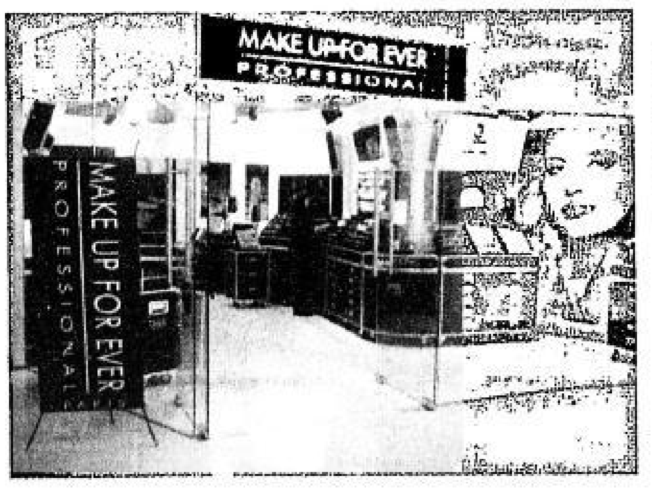
Make Up For Ever:
The brand makeup artists prefer

To all beauty aficionados out there, finally the long wait is over. Make Up For Ever, the professional makeup brand of French luxury conglomerate, Louis Vuitton Moet Hennessy (LVMH), has opened its very first boutique in the country at Shangri-La Plaza's Indulgences at Level 3.

Diana Afable-Lorenzo, managing director of Brio One Commercial Corporation, the company that brought Make Up For Ever in the Philippines, says a lot of makeup artists are very happy and excited about the store's debut here in the country. "Top notch makeup artists such as Denise Go, Bobby Carlos and Patrick Rosas have Make Up For Ever in their beauty kits. They're excited about the brand because they often buy it abroad and now they can get it here."

"The idea for Make Up For Ever's establishment was to provide makeup artists with high quality products that are benefit-laden," says Lorenzo. "Make Up For Ever is much more than marketing or trends or looks. We have products that deliver results," she quips.

A lot of products are in store for the beauty palette-keepers. Glossy Full, for one, is a clear vinyl-effect lip gloss that when applied on the lips will even out the lines and wrinkles giving a youthful, plump yet natural-looking lips. Another product, the Matte Lip, when applied on any lipstick with any shade or color, will give it a total matte, powdery finish. For the overall complexion, Lift Foundation works wonders by giving the skin a "lift" to give it a firm, fresh, and supple appearance. Those with oily skin, on the one hand, can use the Mat Velvet + Foundation. Diamond Powder, one of their bestsellers, does the glitter but won't make the eyes suffer. Star Powder, on the other hand, creates intense shimmer on eyes, cheeks, and lips with its unique formulation of ultra-fine pearl particles, top-quality pigments, and finely-milled powders.



The Make Up For Ever boutique is staffed with professional makeup artists and consultants that are always on hand to give tips and advice to customers.

Bag love

Fall in love all over again... with La Bagager
For over 50 years, this brand has made a h
and grace that create the exquisitely-designed h
La Bagagerie was started by Jean Marlaix i
create new, more casual designs better suited
and uber-femme sophistication.

For decades, Marlaix is known for his rave-
mous checkerboard motifs to match the 1960s
der bags in 1964; the use of crocodile leather in
ping bag in the 80s up to the 90s.

La Bagagerie currently offers functional, styl
ist and Art Nouveau painter Gustav Klimt. "Gu
paintings have been used to influence a new line
the store," says Tristan Luis Ong, managing dir
Bagagerie brand here in the country.

This bag exudes perfection right before it is
the buckle. I've never seen a buckle quite like it
catching. You'd know right away that the bag i
cluded.

Trendy at work with Vero Cuoio's Pazzion

Never trade that fun and chic personality for that uptight, corporate look. Being polished and strong do not mean losing that free spirit.

Jazz up that corporate look with fun, smart and trendy-yet-formal shoes. One also has to look after quality and comfort. Going to several meetings in one day is no joke. Sometimes, when your feet are tired, it can get you in a not-so-good mood.

That's why Vero Cuoio is in the process of developing its store at the Indulgences at Shangri-La Plaza to carry only one, exclusive brand named Pazzion.

"I want to focus on corporate looking shoes," said Coy Chang, owner and manager of Vero Cuoio. "We are after comfort but the look is still very stylish and wearable."

Chang who has perfected the skill of finding the right shoes to offer to the Filipino market started selling shoes 12 years ago. A self-confessed shoe-aholic, she has visited Italy, Spain, and other Asian countries in search of that comfortable pair and style she wants.

Knowing the Philippine shoe market quite well, she hopes to capture a good chunk of the market's corporate segment by introducing this excellent brand from Singapore.

"A few thousand pesos for a pretty, durable and comfortable pair is all worth it. It couldn't get any better than that," she quips.

With the coming out of Pazzion, working people are given a wider range of choices of shoes that complement the corporate look but are, as she aptly described it, "never boring."

Pazzion shoes are also being sold in Australia, Japan, and Singapore.

Crazy ove

Fashion designers and sisters Yvette Ilagan and Choc Dayrit are behind the iconic sounding apparel store Religioso. Both are fashionistas in every sense of the word and the fusion of their creative sides brought about the establishment of a shop that dares to be different and a standout.

Religioso, the maiden surname of the sisters, offers limited fashion pieces for men and women who are particular about the clothes they wear. Religioso apparel, be it a cocktail dress, a long gown, tops, skirts, pants, or even active wear, are classic numbers with a twist. The creations are a reflection of the fashion taste, style and statement of the two fashionable sisters that can be seen in the distinctive details of the garments.

"Our pieces are something you can't find elsewhere. They're classic cuts but we've put in details that are so distinctive. If someone would wear our dress to a part
could almost be assured that she'd
only one wearing that piece," says Yve

Designing is in the background of t
sisters. Yvette studied interior design
Choc took up a course in fashion d
"We both have the same passion, w
love fashion. We basically have
tastes."

Both sisters admit they can't work w
the other. In the creative side of the
ness, Choc adheres to the technica
while Yvette focuses on the overall
"We simply complement each
ideas," she adds.

"Our clothes are investment piece
can still wear them five years from no
store is really about a reinvented
style, black and white, big collars and
details," says Yvette.

Religioso's pieces for the season i

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ndulgences

orld are hip boutiques in the new wing of Indulgences.

Anchored by UK-based Debenhams, this area houses an array of top local and international
rands like Adidas Original Sports Heritage, Beauty Bar, Expressions, Footnotes, InStyle, La
agagerie, Laundry by Shelli Segal, Liz Claiborne, Make Up for Ever, Officine, Religioso, Vero
uoio (soon to be renamed Pazzion), Velvet Rose, and Wallis.

Through Indulgences, Shangri-La Plaza offers the perfect lifestyle mix, tastefully combining
hopping pleasure and convenience with luxury. Get that shopping bag and indulge now at Indul-
ences.

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elvet Rose

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d satins with quirky details in fun and feminine
pastels. Velvet Rose's bestseller is the 5-way
y well with any kind of blouse or dress. The
rder bras particularly to women who are well

Ortrud Jao thought of putting up a lingerie
cause she couldn't find a lingerie store that
e while shopping for private items. Most of the
n feel very awkward when buying undergar-
es lingerie sections because the items are dis-
ublic to see.
are made comfortable by the homey and pri-
more intimate by knowledgeable and helpful
can feel that you're peering inside your closet in
very relaxed and pleasant. You feel pampered

know that Velvet Rose is a local brand but the
with international standards. This is because
re manufactured in Hong Kong by the same
r popular international brands.
that caters to women of varied interests and
of products are designed to make women feel
rtable - something that has become elusive to
one over the other," Ortrud said. "It's no sur-
who before were wearing popular brands, shift-

mpers and grows - and so we created a Bridal
ng that modern women will surely find excit-

o a one-stop-lingerie-haven for clients with dis-

Your own style at InStyle

Today there is more freedom in fashion, casual wear is acceptable in the office, and work wear can go straight to evening events. Modern-day urbanites have broken down fashion stereotypes making it easier to be who you want to be. Being casual does not mean not being in the groove, nor does it mean being grungy. As for being dressy, it's a good thing the majority simply enjoy being straightforward, chic and comfy.

For city creatures, finding ways to express your individuality is easy at InStyle which carries iconic and reliable brands in ready-to-wear. InStyle is a multi-label, one-stop style haven for everyone, from kids to grandmas, from working women to the week-end guy. Take your pick from the InStyle brands of Gap, Banana Republic, Old Navy, Mac and Jac, and Kenzie. "These brands tread on more classic lines and are all affordable," says Ditas Zialcita, general manager for InStyle.

Get Gap for your wardrobe basics, both for the smart everyday look and casual wear with its selection of shirts and wovens, pants and denims. Old Navy, on the other hand, is about fun and get-up-and-go apparel at prices for the budget conscious. InStyle also carries the kid's lines of Gap and Old Navy. If you're feeling more luxurious, Banana Republic is for you with its top quality fabricated wear-to-work-to-evening lines in premium fabrics such as silk and even cashmere.

Working women looking for youthful stylish wardrobe need not look far now that Mac & Jac and Kenzie, two Canadian brands currently making a stir among fashion buffs, is at InStyle. "Mac & Jac is geared for the established career woman," said Ditas. "Kenzie targets the girls of the younger generation." M & J, as fashion insiders call it, purveys new but subtly executed trends that strive to flatter the working woman's figure. Kenzie in turn is light and easy, defined by more fun, figure-hugging wear to catch the young female market's needs for something for work but also something for play.

indulgences
mac & jac

"The brands we carry are not so daring," she explained. "It's easier to get into, be up-to-date with InStyle's brands because they do new fashion touches very subtly and get into the customer's mind. So little by little, we swing you towards the latest fashion trend."

Flattering, age suitable and functional fashion? Who wouldn't like that?

La Bagagerie

e's famous French bags at the Shang!
fty name for itself, carrying the distinction of quality, function
andbags for the style-conscious cosmopolitan women.
1954 in Champs-Elysees in France. Marlaix was inspired to
, the female silhouette. His lines provided colors, suppleness

etting designs such as the wicker baskets lined with the fa-
ichy dresses on the Riviera; the postal carrier-inspired shoul-
junior bags in 1969; the 1970s satchel; and the gilded shop-

sh, and artsy bags inspired by the works of Austrian symbol-
stav Klimt is like the father of female forms in paintings. His
of printed bags like the micro fiber bags that are on display in
ector of Marquee Retail Inc, the company that brought the La

pened. "One of the distinguishing factors of La Bagagerie is
n other bags. It's a broad piece of metal, unique and very eye
a La Bagagerie because of that signature buckle," Ong con-

er Religioso

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reds, hot pinks, plums and black and white party clothes, something that one can wear comfortably at the office and later still wear in a party or gathering. "You can wear our apparel and not feel underdressed."

Religioso has already successfully captured a discriminating loyal following among the 20s and 30somethings. "I think we're really lucky. There are many creative people that don't have the business expertise. But the two of us have both," says Yvette.

The Indulgences' launch:
Infusing a fine line in fashion and beauty

Shangri-La Plaza turned into a premier fashion runway during the launch of the new ultimate lifestyle destination: Indulgences.

Indulgences aims to redefine the shopping lifestyle by dedicating a whole wing of the mall with world-renowned and high-end brands. This high-octane style extravaganza showcases the best in casual, classic and formal wear.

Familiar faces in the fashion industry didn't miss this much-anticipated event. Gracing the event were Shang's chair and president Atty. Andy Bautista, and EVP and general manager Lala Fojas.

The shops showcased what they have in store for the discriminating shoppers. Crimson shades also dominated the runways, played up by textures, prints and patterns that reflect passion and audacity for innovation.

Shangri-La Plaza opened new doors—and stores—where people from the young and not-so-young can have a wide array of choices.

Total beauty at Beauty Bar

Beauty bar
MOD BEAUTY

Vanity takes many forms, and is not exclusive to the female gender. We all need to take care of ourselves — our looks — for that extra boost of confidence. Bottom line is, that boost starts with proper skin care.

Beauty Bar is heaven for everyone who wants to take the right path to beautiful, healthy skin and youthful looks.

Considered as the beauty authority, the store offers a wide range of skin products and solutions. The latest is ModelCo's "Erase Those Fine Lines," a most advanced skincare serum in the world, which works by visibly reducing the appearance of wrinkles around the eye area in minutes.

Beauty Bar has been known to be a treasure trove of skin-pampering goodies starting from bath basics — shampoo, conditioner, soap, bubble bath, shower gel, body scrub — to moisturizing products, i.e. lotion, body butter as well as all other beauty miscellany i.e. oil control sheets, compact mirror, fashion tapes, hair accessories, faux nails, self-adhesive lashes, etcetera.

In this day when everything seems to be moving in such a harried pace, stress and pollution are major de-beautifiers. A 3-step skincare regimen (cleansing, toning, moisturizing) is a good defense.

Philosophy has peel and makeup optional kits, which include a range of beautifying and protecting products. For an organic approach, Burt's Bees is a skincare line which includes garden tomato, cucumber and chamomile among its ingredients. For aging problems, Juice Beauty is your answer.

If you are a make-up fanatic, check out Hollywood celeb's fave Smashbox cosmetics, a complete line of makeup that introduces sweet, sexy sophistication. Another line is aptly called Pout, for its eye-catching, iridescent hues and velvety textures. Looking dull and tired? Try DuWop, known for its flawlessly doll finish.

For teens-on-the-go, try out lip and cheek stain by The Balm. For subtle hints of color, try Bloom's lip gloss and Stardust eye and cheek shimmer for that au naturelle beauty.

Looking and feeling good is a choice. A conscious effort is a must to get that look you want. All you need to do is take that crucial first step.

Dress up your feet with Footnotes

To have nice feet that will give justice to fashionable thongs or flipflops sometimes need some hardwork. After all, feet are sometimes the most neglected and abused—parts of the body.

Taking care of your feet also include giving it the best look with the trendiest footwear in the market. This is actually the easiest part thanks to Shangri-La Plaza's Footnotes at Indulgences.

Footnotes' mission is to provide the female population the "candiest," trendiest, and outright "delicious" footwear. Carrying America's most popular brands Bongo, Candie's, Dollhouse, Paris Blues, and Report, Footnotes also allows you to wear what Hollywood fashion icons wear.

Whether sexy, fun, glam, hip, chic, funky, modern, sporty, or feminine, name it, Footnotes has a perfect pair for you. With its wide array of fanciful collection, a visit to Footnotes is a sure feast to the eyes with lots of vibrant colors and tempting styles that can really make your feet deliciously eye-catching.

But don't wear just about anything you want. Make sure that the color and style perfectly suit your outfit. Get that really girly look with a pair of bright sandals, flashy wedges, or glitzy beaded flats.

You can also find the cool collection of Chinese Laundry. There is no reason to make a mistake with its stylish daytime looks in innovative fabrics and leathers to evening collections in dressy metallic and iridescent hues. And because girls just can't leave without bags, Chinese Laundry helps you find the latest craze in "bag-ville." It features colorful bags to complete the look you want.

Footnotes has been specifically created so all girls can keep their footsies all glammed up. With Footnotes around, celebrities need not have the monopoly on designer fashion brands.

The heritage that is adidas

Well, who doesn't know adidas? Seventy-five years strong and counting, adidas has evolved from being a shoe brand to a major sporting apparel. For all of us who enjoy an active lifestyle, we are sure to have owned an adidas at least once in our lifetime.

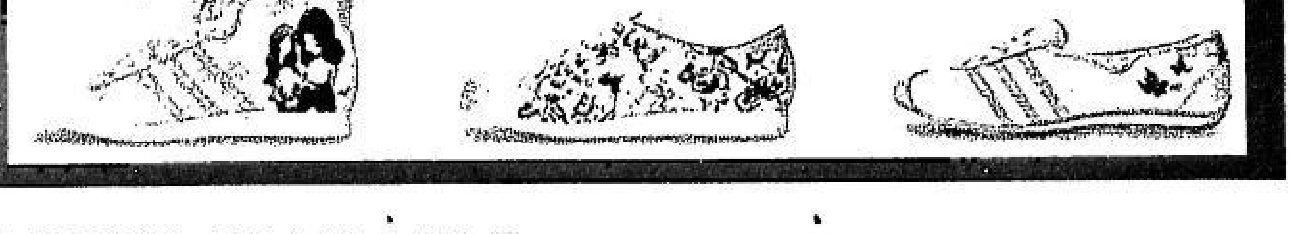
The shop at Shang's Indulgences bears the original logo, which has defined the legend of adidas. Adi Dassler's authentic vision and passion lives and continues to evolve with the foremost sporting brand.

The original concept apparel has also defined global street style evident in old school hip hop. It offers a complete line of sport-inspired footwear, apparel, and accessories for men and women that blend adidas' street and active fashion.

From celebrities, sports heroes, to urban street mainstays, adidas is a name that defines style. Being associated with adidas not only means radiating coolness and athleticism but also commands reverence to the life chosen by those who refuse to be idle and restricted.

Sweaty sportswear can now be stylish with track tops, tennis shirts, and functional shoes. You don't have to cringe in your sloppy stretch because adidas designed an aerobic and dance-inspired cotton wear. A cotton hoodie is elevated from the norm by feminine details including rouching at the hood and lovely all-over print lining. A sporty tee evokes the aerobic and dance feel of the early '80s.

The adidas original sports heritage collection updates classic silhouettes using sparkling fabrics on unique fabrics in distinct fits and cuts.



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10:40PM 4:45PM 7:05PM 9:25PM
Matinee Fee- P200 Primetime Fee- P200
T-REX IN 3D
1:00PM 2:15PM 3:30PM
Admission Fee- P200
1 THE MESSENGER
2 DEJA VU
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 THE CLEANER
5 CHARLOTTE'S WEB/ BABEL
6 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE/ AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
PREMIERE CINEMA
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
CENTERSTAGE
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
THE HOLIDAY
CINEMA 2
THE CLEANER
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
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2 BABEL
3 ERAGON
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 THE HOLIDAY
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
10 AGENT X44
11 THE MESSENGER
12 THE CLEANER

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 THE HOLIDAY
2 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 THE MESSENGER
5 BABEL
6 ERAGON
7 DEJA VU
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 AGENT X44
10 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
11 ROB-B-HOOD
12 ERAGON

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 DEJA VU
3 THE CLEANER
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5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 THE MESSENGER
7 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 THE HOLIDAY
10 AGENT X44
11 BLOOD DIAMOND
12 ERAGON

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 THE MESSENGER
2 THE INVINCIBLE
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 THE HOLIDAY
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
7 ERAGON
8 AGENT X44
9 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
10 THE CLEANER

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 THE MESSENGER
2 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 THE HOLIDAY
5 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
5 THE CLEANER

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 THE MESSENGER
2 THE HOLIDAY
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 THE CLEANER
6 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
7 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
8 BABEL
9 AGENT X44

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1 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
2 THE HOLIDAY
3 THE MESSENGER
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 THE MESSENGER
2 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 THE CLEANER
6 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
7 DEJA VU
8 BLOOD DIAMOND
9 BABEL
10 ERAGON
11 ROB-B-HOOD
12 AGENT X44

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 THE MESSENGER
2 ZU WARRIORS
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 THE MESSENGER
2 THE HOLIDAY
3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 THE HOLIDAY
2 THE MESSENGER
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

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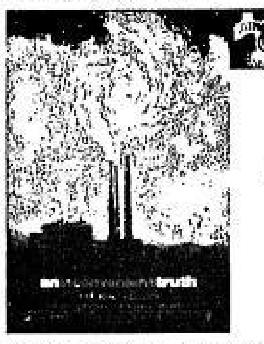

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8 THE HOLIDAY

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4 FEAST

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6 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

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2 AGENT X44
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 TENACIOUS D

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3 BABEL
4 CHARLOTTE'S WEB

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4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

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2 BABEL
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 THE HOLIDAY
5 ERAGON
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7 AGENT X44
8 THE MESSENGER

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4 AGENT X44
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
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8 SPIRIT TRAP

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2 GRIFFIN AND PHOENIX
3 AGENT X44
4 THE MESSENGER
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6 BLOOD DIAMOND

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2 ROB-B-HOOD
3 ZU WARRIORS
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

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inspiring love stories in entertainment

By Nestor U. Torre

AREVALO AND PEREZ. Extraordinary emotional investment.

AS WE CELEBRATE the power and beauty of love on Valentine's Day, we recall some of the most beautiful love stories involving people in show business and the arts. Would that we were as passionate and romantically involved!

Let's start with the "greatest love" story of director Pio de Castro and his actress wife, Joy Soler. They were more than lovers, they were also soulmates.

Challenging

Their already deeply loving relationship took an even more challenging and inspiring turn when Pio was downed by a stroke, and fell into a coma—for years.

The couple's mutual friends were deeply moved when they saw how devotedly Joy was taking care of her "sleeping" husband. We knew that we ourselves weren't capable of such selfless and loyal devotion.

Even after Pio passed away, Joy continued to honor his memory and invite their friends to do the same. After she too fell ill, Joy has had to focus more on herself, but her love for Pio remains an inspiring beacon for all would-be lovers everywhere.

In a nonromantic vein, Pio and Joy's love story is matched by the loving way that Celia Diaz-Laurel, her son Cocoy and his other siblings continue to care for their similarly comatose brother, Kristipee, for many years now.

Central part

Even after many others would have stopped praying, hoping and caring, they have kept Kristipee a central part of their family.

Ditto for the also "sleeping" Terry Wilson, the mother of Monique and Jamie, who continues to be loved and cared for by her children.

Back to romantic mode, we celebrate the abiding love of Pete and Boots Anson Roa, even after Pete's stroke. We've seen the couple working hard at Pete's therapy, and their quiet fortitude in the face of so many difficulties is most inspiring to behold.

Only last week, we learned that Pete was again rushed to the hospital, but we trust that their love will help them weather this latest reversal with their optimism intact.

Definition

Speaking of the heights of love in show biz, our very definition of the joys of breathlessly passionate love is based on two stellar romantic displays we were inadvertently witness to:

The first involved two then young stars whom we espied friskily gamboling, absolutely mad for one another, in a posh furniture store. No, they weren't shopping for a new bed, they were simply celebrating

INSPIRING/ G8

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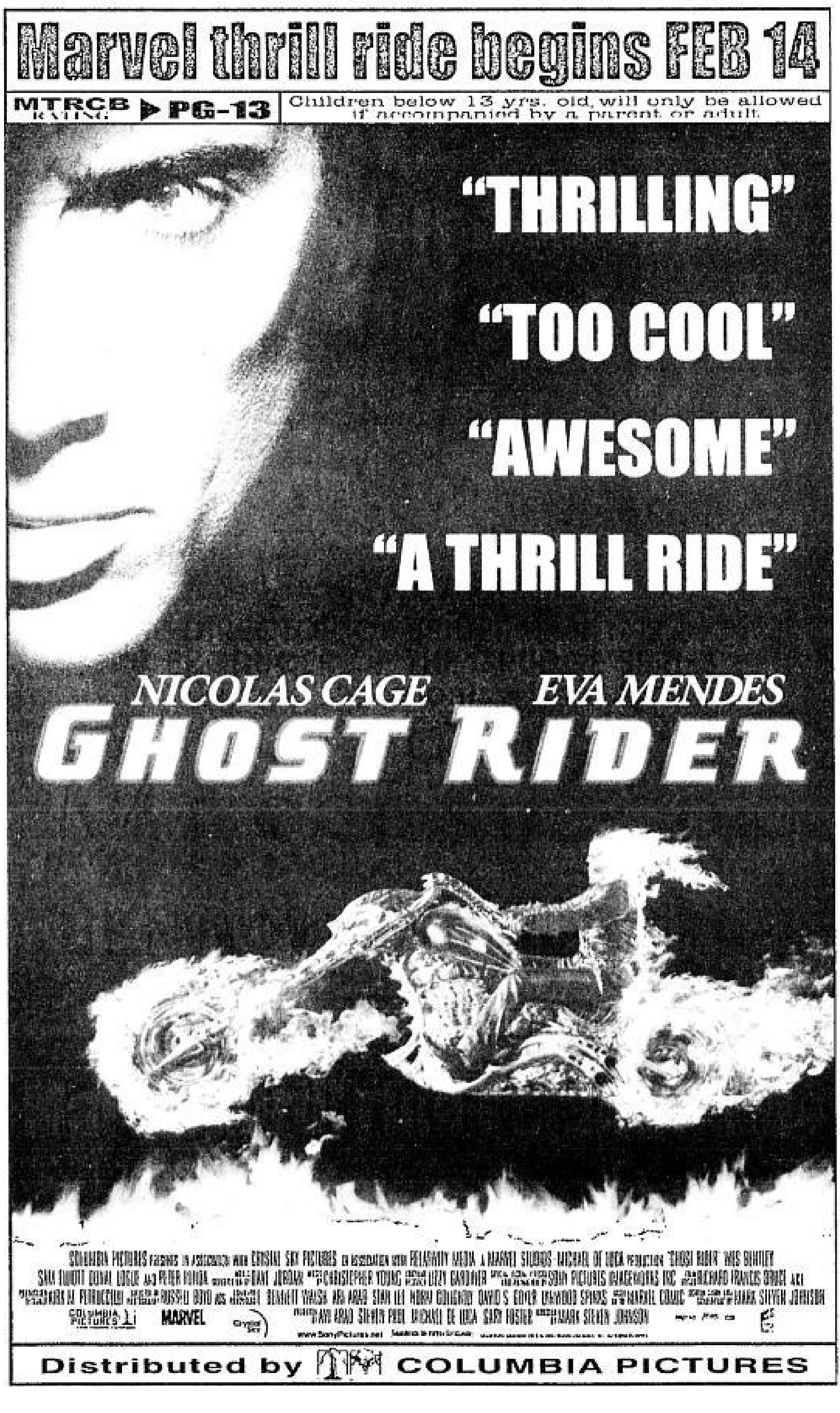

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"AWESOME"
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My brother Gary

From page G2

weight loss, enlarged liver, vomiting, and swelling of the abdomen and legs.

Anemia, bruising due to bleeding under the skin, jaundice, and edema follow.

How do you prevent liver disorders? The best way is to take charge of your health—and stop alcohol abuse!

Email mandynavasero@yahoo.com

SHANG CINEPLEX

① THE HOLIDAY
MTRCB PG-13
1 00. 4 00. 7.00. 10.00

② CHARLOTTE'S WEB
12.25, 2.45, 5.05 MTRCB. GP
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 25. 10 00 MTRCB GP

③ CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
MTRCB R-13
2:15, 4.50, 7.25, 10 00

④ HANNIBAL RISING
1.45, 4 30 MTRCB R-18
APOCALYPTO
7.00, 10.00 MTRCB: R-18

PREMIERE THEATRE
THE MESSENGER
MTRCB PG-13
12 30, 2 45, 5.00, 7.15, 9.35

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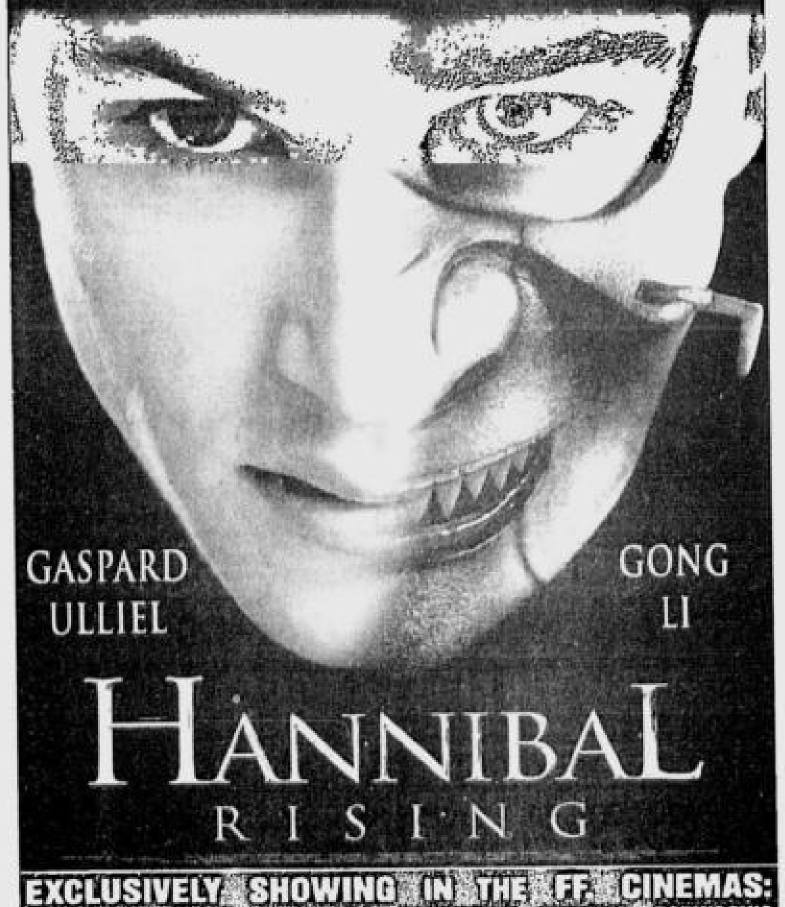

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1 (DOLBY) THE HOLIDAY
2 (DOLBY) CHARLOTTE'S WEB
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 (DOLBY) HANNIBAL RISING
APOCALYPTO
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) THE MESSENGER

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1 THE HOLIDAY
2 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 APOCALYPTO
4 HANNIBAL RISING

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3 HANNIBAL RISING
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
5 RESRVED

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2 HANNIBAL RISING
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 APOCALYPTO

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1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X 44
3 A GOOD YEAR

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2 BLOOD DIAMOND/DECK THE HALL
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

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1 (DOLBY) CODENAME CLEANER
2 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 (DTS) NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 GOLD (DTS) APOCALYPTO
5 GOLD (DOLBY) THE HOLIDAY
6 GOLD (SDDS) THE MESSENGERS
7 GOLD (DOLBY) HANNIBAL RISING
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
10 AGENT X 44

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
2 (DOLBY) NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 (DOLBY) APOCALYPTO
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
2 APOCALYPTO
3 THE MESSINGERS
4 CODENAME CLEANER
5 HANNIBAL RISING

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2 ABNORMAL BEAUTY
3 JUNDARA
4 RESERVED

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1 AGENT X 44
2 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 HANNIBAL RISING

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 SAW - 3
2 DECK THE HALLS/BLOOD DIAMOND

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY) THE MESSINGERS
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 (DTS) CHARLOTTE'S WEB
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 HAPPY FEET

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) HANNIBAL RISING
2 (DOLBY) THE HOLIDAY
3 (DOLBY) APOCALYPTO
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 AGENT X 44
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 (DOLBY) RESERVED
3 (DTS) RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 AGENT X 44
3 (DOLBY) SAW - 3

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 LITTLE CHILDREN
2 AGENT X 44
3 (DOLBY) SPIRIT TRAP
4 (DTS) BLOOD DIAMOND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM/A GOOD YEAR
2 AGENT X 44
3 (DOLBY) LITTLE CHILDREN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 ROB-B-HOOD

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 AGENT X 44

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (DOLBY) CODENAME CLEANER
2 TAGINIT
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 (DTS) SAW-3

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) TENACIOUS - D
2 MAPANUKSO
3 (DTS) THE RETURN
4 KALABIT
5 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 CHECK IN
2 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
3 ARTHURE & THE INVISIBLE
4 TENACIOUS - D

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 SAW-3
2 SYA AY NAGDADALAGA

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1 NIGHT at the MUSEUM • THX
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
2 THE HOLIDAY
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
3 indieSine: COMPOUND
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
4 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
5 HANNIBAL RISING
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
6 THE MESSENGERS
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
7 THE CLEANER
1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00
8 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE 12:00 2:10 4:20
LITTLE CHILDREN 6:40 9:40
9 APOCALYPTO
1:15 4:10 7:05 10:00
10 CHARLOTTE's WEB
1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00

ERMITA
Ticket Price: P110 538-7809 to 12

1 THE HOLIDAY
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
2 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
3 HANNIBAL RISING
12:35 3:00 5:25 7:45 10:00
4 THE CLEANER
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
5 THE MESSENGERS
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
6 APOCALYPTO
12:35 3:40 6:45 10:00
7 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
12:35 3:00 5:25 7:45 10:00

METRO EAST
Ticket Price: P100 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE CLEANER
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
2 THE MESSENGERS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
3 APOCALYPTO
12:30 3:10 6:00 9:00
4 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
12:00 2:10 4:20 6:40 9:00
5 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05
6 BLOOD and CHOCOLATE
12:00 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10
7 HANNIBAL RISING
12:50 3:35 6:20 9:05
8 THE HOLIDAY
12:30 3:10 6:00 9:00

NOVALICHES
Ticket Price: P91 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
2 THE MESSENGERS
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 THE CLEANER
5 APOCALYPTO

PIONEER
Ticket Price: P102 687-5378

1 THE HOLIDAY
12:05 2:55 5:45 8:35
2 THE MESSENGERS
1:10 3:35 6:00 8:25
3 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
1:30 3:55 6:20 8:40
4 HANNIBAL RISING
12:55 3:25 5:55 8:25

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A stunning visual achievement, COMPOUND is a contemporary thriller that deals with the complexities of love, wealth, and fear. A perfectly unexpected and well-executed ending make this a film not to be missed.
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"Melrose Place", as seen through the unflinching eyes of David Lynch and Mike de Leon.
- Paul Daza, Philippine Daily Inquirer

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2 TENACIOUS D
3 AGENT X44
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1 THE MESSENGERS
2 APOCALYPTO
3 THE CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

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2 CHARLOTTE's WEB
3 THE MESSENGERS
4 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER

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1 APOCALYPTO
2 THE MESSENGERS
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
5 NIGHT at the MUSEUM

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4 THE MESSENGERS
5 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
6 APOCALYPTO

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2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 AGENT X44
6 TENACIOUS D

ILOILO
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1 CHARLOTTE's WEB
2 AGENT X44
3 SPIRIT TRAP
4 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
5 ROB-B-HOOD
6 BLOOD DIAMOND

indieSine Featured FILM
for next week
Rome and Juliet
starring: Mylene Dizon and Andrea del Rosario

This tale follows the romantic journey of two straight women caught in a web of forbidden love. Juliet, a conservative pre-school teacher hires Rome, a liberated businesswoman to be her wedding planner. As they go through the preparations, the two develop a relationship that the groom to be soon finds out.

New albums drip with romantic mush and melancholy

By Rito P. Asilo

CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA'S FIRST live recording, "Just a Love Song," is a must-have for the hopelessly romantic. The hefty, 19-track collection is a concept album that includes songs from the silver screen ("Message in a Bottle," "Staying Alive") and from David Pomeranz.

The balladeer's new disc appropriately starts with Barry Manilow's "Trying to Get the Feeling Again," which Pomeranz composed.

Fresh sound

In "More Than You'll Ever Know," he begins with an unfamiliar intro ("Now, don't you worry anymore, as I've told you before, am never, ever leaving you…") before it segues smoothly into its familiar melody—a well-intentioned effort to infuse a fresh sound into the classic love tune.

There's much to enjoy in this collection: Bread's "Make It With You," Pomeranz's "Got to Believe in Magic," "Of All The Things," Diane Warren's "Could Not Ask For More," Joe Jackson's "Be My Number Two," and Rick Astley's "Cry for Help."

It's refreshing to listen to a rich male voice interpreting "Finding Out the Hard Way," which was composed by Sylvester Stallone's brother, Frank, and originally sung by Cynthia Rhodes for John Travolta's 1983 film, "Staying Alive."

Gerry Paraiso's "You," first sung by Basil Valdez in the '80s and revived a decade later by Roselle Nava, also finds its way into the track listing.

Our top pick is Walter Murphy's "Just a Love Song," from the singer's 1976 album, "A Fifth of Beethoven." Yes, Virginia, the popular ballad actually comes from an album of classical music—but arranged with the disco beat! The unabashedly sentimental song drips with saccharine mush and melancholy.

Nina, too, has a new recording that bursts with love songs—a self-titled, 11-track compilation that showcases the sultry siren's versatility: Joleen Belle's "Ooh Boy" is a toe-tapping piece with a catchy refrain. Franne Golde's sexy "Where Is Love" has of a vocal arrangement reminiscent of Mariah Carey's famous, breathy cooing.

BAUTISTA. Live recording of love songs.

NINA. Versatile.

Mike Reid and James Shamblin's torch song, "I Can't Make You Love Me," has been enjoying a succession of revivals. Bonnie Raitt's anthemic song for the lovelorn is hard to top, but Nina gives a beautifully dressed-down version. It features simple, straightforward singing with guitar strumming in the background, and a last stanza that's transposed twice to show off the singer's stratospheric vocal range.

CAYABYAB. Uplifting, unpredictable melodies that can stand on their own—even without words.

Top tracks: The introspective, traffic-stopping "Someday," that boasts of a rich melody and Nina's emotive panache. Also noteworthy are Juan Ariel Coma's birthday song, "Sa Araw Na 'To," Eric Cabahug's "Is It Over?" and Nyoy Volante's "I Need Your Love."

Videos

Local band Join the Club, which broke into the music scene with "Nobela" last year, recently came out with a special edition of the group's album, which now contains the music videos of "Nobela," "Lunes" and "Tinig," as well as eight other tracks. Our top choices include "Minsan Pa" and "Lunes."

One of the pleasant surprises from the recording scene this season is "Dancing in the Rain," Ryan Cayabyab's latest recording with the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Miguel Master Chorale.

The album's songs have intriguing titles like "Photographs of You and Me Together," "Frap for Two on a Beach in Cebu," "Alone, Drenched in the Red, Orange and Gold of a Manila Sunset," "Almost Sun-up and I Haven't Slept."

Short but sweet

Mr. C's clear baritone opens the album with short but sweet melodic lines ("First Glance") that mirror the general mood and sentiment of the rest of the lineup: "If we could stay in love this way, I must say this love affair is gonna last forever…"

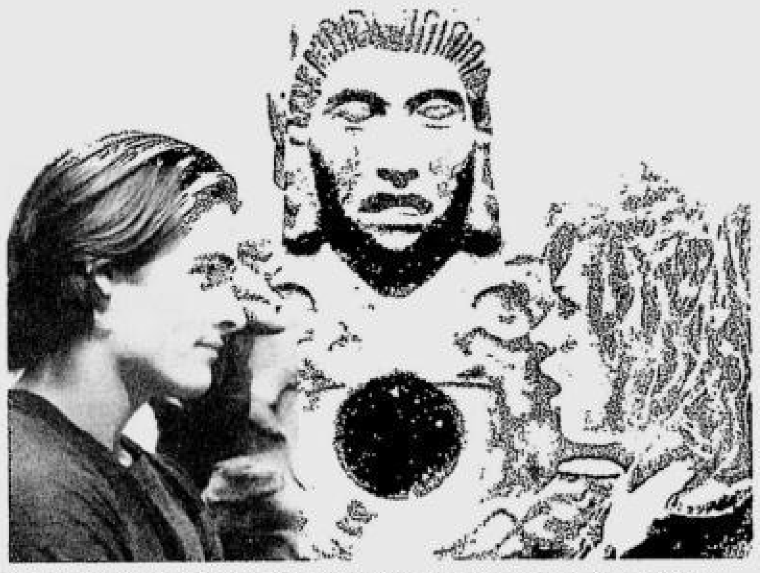
The waltzy "Like Children Dancing in the Rain with Nothing On" is somber but sweetly engaging—a heart-tugging number that swells before it reaches its wordless finale.

Trust Ryan to consistently come up with uplifting, unpredictable melodies that can stand on their own—even without words!

Romeo and Juliet Love again

MONTAGE

THE NEW FILM, "IT'S A BOY Girl Thing" is an update on "Romeo and Juliet," with the Bedworths and the Deanes standing in for the combative Montagues and Capulets of old. Their children, Woody (Kevin Zegers) and Nell (Samaire Armstrong) also hate each other with a vengeance —until an ancient Aztec statue weaves its weird spell on them, and they wake up to find that they have exchanged bodies! Talk about gender benders, these two polar opposites now get a taste of life at the other side of the looking glass—and valuable lessons are learned. Even better, the instructions include romance!


ZEGERS AND ARMSTRONG. Weird spell weaves magic in "It's A Boy Girl Thing."

'Babel'

Alejandro Gonzalez Iñarritu's "Babel" has received seven Oscar nominations—for best picture, director, screenplay, editing, original score, best supporting actress (Adriana Barraza and Rinko Kikuchi). The film is about random fate and the perils of being unable to communicate.

'Mee-Shee'

Now on DVD and VCD, "Mee-Shee, The Water Giant" is about a legendary lake creature that saves a little boy from drowning, leading to a reexamination of "monsters" and other terrors.

'The Holiday'

Nancy Meyers' latest romantic comedy, "The Holiday," has a dream cast—Cameron Diaz, Jude Law, Kate Winslet and Jack Black. Diaz and Winslet swap houses on different continents and unintentionally get mixed up in each other's lives—and loves.

'Nasaan si Francis?'

Gabby Fernandez' "Nassan si Francis?" is now on DVD. It stars Christopher de Leon, Epy Quizon, Angel Aquino and Paolo Contis, and is about a hilarious cat-and-mouse game involving a dead body, and dealing with the deeper issues of family and friendship.

On National Geographic Channel

Today at 11 a.m., "I Didn't Know That." 12 noon, "Pompeii Uncovered." 5 p.m., "Triumph of Life: Brain Power." 6 p.m., "Everyday Things: The Toilet." 10 p.m., "Maximum Security: Protecting the President."

VIOLAN. Three-in-one celebration.

'Basilia ng Malolos' at UP

The UP Playwrights Theater's "Basilia ng Malolos" starts its run on Feb. 14, 7 p.m. at the Guerrero Theater of UP Diliman. Directed by José Estrella and choreographed by Dexter Santos, the *sarswela* about the 20 women of Malolos is topbilled by Jenny Jamora, Nikki Ventosa, Neil Sese, Diana Alferez and Rito Asilo. "Basilia" runs until Mar. 4. Call Joanne Quiros at 981-8300 loc. 2449, or 0927 827-4610.

"The Grudge 2'

Sam Raimi's "The Grudge 2" is now on video. The popular horror flick revolves around a group of strangers (Sarah Michelle Gellar, Amber Tamblyn, etc.) who turns out to be connected by a supernatural curse.

'Operation S.M.O.O.C.H.'

Cartoon Network's "Operation S.M.O.O.C.H." includes Feb. 14 specials from 5 to 7 p.m. On Feb. 24 and 25 from 7 to 9 p.m., "The Simpsons' Red Carpet Weekend" kicks off the Oscar Awards. Ongoing on weekends until Feb. 25 from 4 to 6 p.m., "Chunky Weekend Toons" features all-time favorites.

Animated features: Today at 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., "Romeo and Juliet—Sealed with a Kiss." Tomorrow at 8 a.m., "Tobias Totz." Feb. 18 at 8 a.m., "A Man Called Flintstone." Feb. 24 at 8 a.m., "Looney Looney Bugs Bunny Movie."

Love, Ivy

Ivy Violan marks her 25th year in show business with a Valentine's Day concert, "Easy to Love You," on Feb. 14 at the Peninsula Manila hotel's Rigodon Ballroom. Her special guests are Nonoy Zuñiga and Nanette Inventor, and Mel Villena conducts the orchestra. Ivy will also launch her new album, "Ivy Silver Series." Call 832-2974, or 0917 901-1333.

LAW AND DIAZ. Star in "The Holiday."

Bimbo Cerrudo

At 8 p.m. on Feb. 16 at the Philamlife Theater, Bimbo Cerrudo headlines "The Love Concert," a fundraiser for the Cancer Warriors Foundation. The Manila Philharmonic Orchestra is featured. Call 551-4588 or 0917 848-5258.

Jimmy Marquez

Singing champ Jimmy Marquez has released his self-titled CD-lite album, which incudes "Minsa'y Naging Bahagi Ka," "Tanging Ikaw," "Hanggang Ngayon," "Hero" and "I Was Looking for Someone to Love."

Raymond Lauchengco

"Classic Romance 2: Walking on Sunshine" topbills Raymond Lauchengco on Feb. 13 and 14 at the Teatrino in Greenhills. The Valentine show features a big-band sound and special guests Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo and Ayen Munji-Laurel. Call 721-2762 or 0917 533-4206.

Concert at the Park

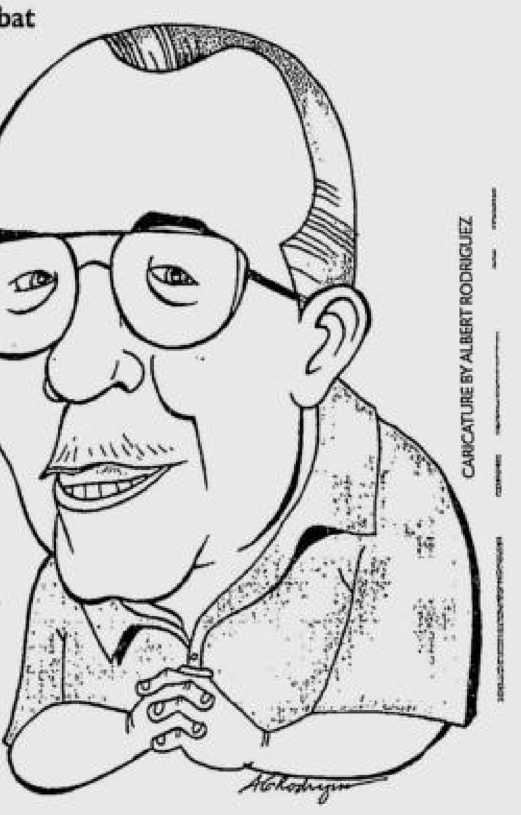
The Angono Youth Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Nonoy Diestro, is featured in Concert at the Park at Rizal Park tomorrow. Program includes works by Suzuki, Bach, Schumann, Handel and Mozart.

'Faces of Love' gets glowing praises from CEB

By Ronald G. Mangubat

WE RECENTLY GOT hold of the Cinema Evaluation Board's two-page summation on "Faces of Love," director Eddie Romero's first digital film, and read the reasons why his light romantic movie was bestowed the A grade.

CEB found Romero's latest opus-a love story *cum* whodunnit that revolves around a series of anonymous letters—interesting, entertaining and heartfelt. One reviewer said the National Artist for Film delivers a breezy, little movie that has no pretensions. "His direction is generally competent, efficient and very inspired in some parts. Romero creates the urbane world of his movie's past. He allows us to get a glimpse of his romantic side."



ROMERO. The National Artist for Film still has the capacity to surprise viewers—at 82!

Peanut gallery

Another comment: "This is a light, romantic film that delights without pandering to the usual peanut gallery that thinks that only young love teams have a claim to this genre."

Members also praised the well-written script, penned by Romero and Rica Arevalo. They said the screenplay is fast-paced, clever, witty and humorous. One reviewer expounded: "Romero paints us a picture with old-world charm that he astutely spices up with hip situations and dialogue."

The CEB also commended Romero for getting the best from his acting ensemble, specifically from his leads, Christopher de Leon and Angel Aquino. The cast also includes Alfred Vargas, Chanda Romero, Bembol Roco, Jackie Aquino and Rodel Velayo. On the technical side, the production design elicited praise, while the music was described as "*mahusay*….very nostalgic."

Technical expertise

Romero tapped the talents of young digital filmmakers who unselfishly shared their technical expertise. This includes the likes of assistant director Paolo Villaluna (director of "Ilusyon"), musical director Jobin Ballesteros (Bernal awardee at Cinemanila 2006), cinematographer Jun Aves, and editor Ron Dale.

So, don't fail to watch "Moments of Love" on Feb. 21 if only to see how, at 82, our National Artist for Film continues to weave his cinematic magic and mastery. As one reviewer succinctly puts it: "After all these years, Eddie Romero still has the capacity to surprise us!"

inspiring love stories in entertainment

From page G6

their palpitating love for each other—to the max!

The second stellar pair was even more love-besotted. We were in Washington, DC, for an all-star show, and in our hotel's elevator, we saw another stellar pair of lovers so giddily happy in each other's company-and sweetly loving embrace. They were so focused on each other that, in their view, nobody else existed—including us.

Love-besotted pair

Alas, both love-besotted pairs are no longer with each other—proof positive that, even when it comes to "eternal," stellar love, "forever" may only be a couple of years away!

Durable unions

One of the most truly durable unions we know of in show business is the marriage of Barbara Perez and Robert Arevalo. One reason for its abiding strength could be the extraordinary emotional investment it has been built on: Barbara gave up a promising Hollywood career to marry Robert!

This was after she had co-starred with Jeffrey Hunter in the Hollywood movie, "No Man is an Island," where she did so well that she was offered a long-term contract.

After mulling the very tempting offer over, however, Barbara decided that her love for Robert was the greater prize. What as inspiring sacrifice in the name of love, particularly in these Hollywood-*gaga* parts!

Strong

Barbara and Robert are still going strong, despite illnesses and the other natural slings and arrows that even stars are heir to.

Breaking news: We hear that Barbara and Robert could be playing key roles in the Cinemalaya 2007 entry, "Gulong," written by Jeanne Lim and directed by Sockie Fernandez. Talk about coming full circle, this is it!

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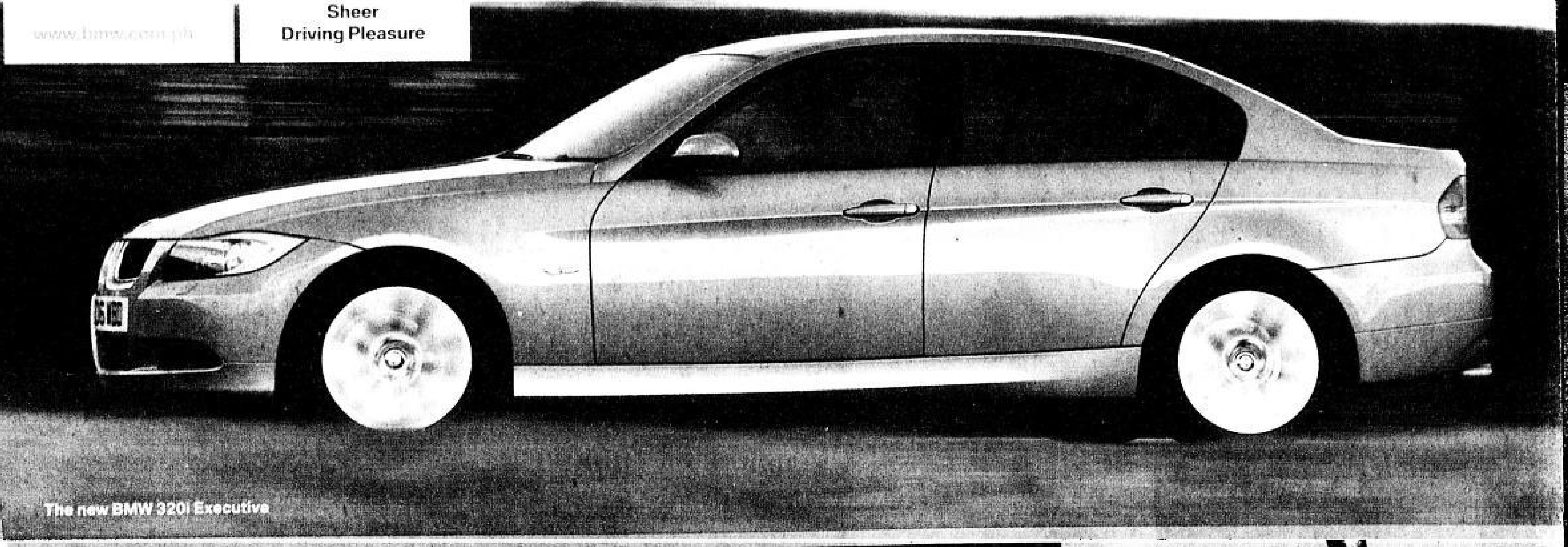

The new BMW 320i Executive

BMW Stirs Up "Passion" at the BMW Xpo on February 9-11, 2007

Featuring the 2007 BMW Model Line-up for cars and motorcycles

The new BMW K1200 R Sport

BMW is inviting customers and enthusiasts to experience different forms of passion at the BMW Xpo on February 9-11, 2007. With the underlying theme of "Passion" this upcoming BMW Xpo will feature the latest BMW cars and motorcycles, exciting ownership deals, exclusive lifestyle items and a preview of the BMW Art Car Tour.

BMW Cars and Motorcycles:
Exciting new models and variants unveiled.

The BMW Xpo will showcase the latest BMW cars and motorcycles, which comprise the youngest and widest model range in the luxury segment. Making its Philippine premiere are the newest additions to the BMW model range: the athletic BMW X3, the spirited BMW Z4 Coupé, the dynamic BMW 320i Executive and the trendy BMW 118i Executive. The latest BMW Motorrad sport models will also be featured, namely the new BMW R 1200 S, K 1200 R Sport, F 800 S, and F 800 ST.

Passion for Adventure:
The new BMW X3

Offering a unique combination of agility and versatility, the new BMW X3 Sports Activity Vehicle arrives at the BMW Xpo with powerful new engines, a fresh interior and exterior design and a wide range of technological features.

The new BMW X3 is available in both petrol and diesel engine variants. The BMW X3 2.5si Executive features the latest inline six-cylinder engine that delivers a maximum output of 218 horsepower (hp) and peak torque of 250 Newton-metres (Nm). The BMW X3 2.0d, on the other hand, is powered by a four-cylinder diesel engine with the latest generation common-rail fuel injection achieving a maximum output of 150 hp, with torque peaking at 330 Nm.

Passion for Emotion:
The New BMW Z4 2.5si Coupé

The BMW Xpo will also mark the presentation of the new BMW Z4 3.0si Coupé.

Developed from the start as a high performance sports car, the new BMW Z4 Coupé offers a weight-optimised body, ultra-modern chassis and suspension, and a powerful, technologically innovative engine. Under the immense hood of BMW Z4 Coupé 3.0si is BMW's award winning 3.0-litre inline-six engine. Built on a technologically advanced magnesium-and-aluminum hybrid block casting, this power unit produces 265 hp at 6,600 rpm, with torque peaking at 315 Nm. The BMW Z4 Coupé 3.0si additionally features a six-speed automatic transmission with sporty paddle shifters on the steering wheel.

Passion for Performance:
The new BMW 320i Executive

The best-selling BMW 320i Executive makes its dynamic arrival in 2007 with new additional equipment. These include attractive 17" light alloy wheels for a sportier look and stance, as well as rain sensors, automatic driving lights control, and partial electric front seats for added convenience.

Passion for Expression:
The new BMW 118i Executive

The BMW 118i Executive, the first and only compact car in the premium segment with rear-wheel drive, will also be presented during the BMW Xpo. Equipped with refreshing new features – dynamic-looking 16" light alloy wheels and electric seats with memory for the driver, the BMW 118i Executive offers a premium experience for the young and trendy set.

Passion for Speed:
The latest BMW Motorrad Models

BMW Philippines Motorrad is also introducing its newest and most exciting motorcycles at the BMW Xpo.

The new BMW R 1200 S is the most powerful production Boxer the world has ever seen – a machine standing out clearly from all other models in the range. Modified in numerous important features including weight and engine performance, the new high-performance Boxer offers enormous power reaching a peak 122 hp at 6250 rpm.

The new BMW K 1200 R Sport is the fourth model in BMW Motorrad's most powerful model series. Based on the popular BMW K 1200 R, the BMW K 1200 R Sport is features a semi-fairing and a more upright seating position which is suitable for traveling long distances at high speeds. With a maximum output of 163 hp, kerb weight of just 241 kg, and its innovative Duolever and Paralever suspension, the BMW K 1200 R Sport offers the highest standard of riding dynamics and performance at all times and under all conditions.

Entering the midrange motorcycle segment, BMW is introducing two brand new models: the sporting BMW F 800 S and the touring-oriented BMW F 800 ST. Now forming BMW Motorrad's fourth model series, these new two-cylinder compact sports/sports touring machines offer sporty looks, excellent riding qualities and superior agility.

Passion for Imagination:
BMW Art Car Miniature Display

From their conception in 1975, the BMW Art Cars have combined the high performance of BMW with the vivid imagery of the art world, becoming outlets for esteemed artists to express their creative interpretation of motion. Through magnificent strokes and splashes of color, the BMW Art Cars have created a cultural phenomenon that combines the automobile and art worlds.

The unique "rolling sculptures" are currently on a world tour and will be presented at the Ayala Museum on March 7-31, 2007. As a special treat to BMW Xpo patrons, a preview of the BMW Art Cars Collection available through a specially designed display of the BMW Art Car Miniatures. Capturing the essence and detail in a precise 1:18 scale, these perfect miniature works of art expertly preserve the artist's ingenuity and display a level of manufacturing that accurately matches the originals.

Passion for Substance:
The BMW Premium Selection and Pre-owned vehicles

BMW will likewise offer comprehensive information on the BMW Premium Selection – BMW's pioneering Certified Pre-owned Program during the Xpo Event. BMW cars under Premium Selection pass through strict criteria including a100-point technical check and are thus covered by a 12-month or 20,000 kilometer warranty.

Customers at the BMW Xpo can have instant access to the complete line of pre-owned BMW cars being offered by all authorized BMW dealers through its Virtual Showroom – an interactive online car finder located at www.bmw.com.ph. With this innovative web-based service, prospective BMW owners can conveniently locate their pre-owned vehicle and arrange for a test drive.

Exciting BMW Offers

Owning a brand new BMW during Xpo month is much easier under a special financing plan in cooperation with Security Bank. For a low downpayment of only Php 77,000, prospective BMW owners can drive away with a brand new BMW 316i. And for a brand-new BMW 116i, the required downpayment is only Php 66,000. Balance is payable in affordable monthly installments for up to five years.

Flexible financing packages are also available for all other BMW models.

Special BMW Promotions:
Chance to Win a Weekend Adventure or Leisure Package from Club Punta Fuego for every test drive

Guests of the BMW Xpo are welcome to test drive the latest BMW models. In addition, each test drive will entitle the driver to join a lucky draw for a chance to win a Weekend Adventure Package or Leisure Package at Club Punta Fuego.

BMW Aftersales Services:
Original BMW Parts and Accessories.

The latest original BMW parts and accessories are also featured at the BMW Xpo, with BMW owners able to take advantage of 0% interest for up to 12 months on selected BMW M aerodynamic packages. Visitors will be able to see and purchase the latest BMW Accessories and Lifestyle Items and BMW Motorrad Riding Gear.

Welcome to the Xpo

The BMW Xpo, supported by Security Bank and Club Punta Fuego, will be held from February 9 to 11, 2007 at the BMW Pavilion, Fort Strip, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City. Opening hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The BMW Art Car by Andy Warhol, 1979

Presenting the new BMW X3 Sports Activity Vehicle

A higher level of agility and versatility with a fresh new look

BMW Philippines announces the athletic arrival of the new BMW X3 Sport Activity Vehicle (SAV). Offering a unique combination of agility and versatility, the new BMW X3 is a clear progression of its predecessor's unique story of success. Already widely recognized for its outstanding driving dynamics and functionality, the new BMW X3 SAV is further improved with powerful new engines, a fresh interior and exterior design and a wide range of technological features.

Dynamic performance borne out of new powerful and efficient engines.

The new BMW X3 2.5si makes its debut with an inline six-cylinder engine that features a lightweight composite magnesium/aluminium crankcase. Weighing only 165 kilos and additionally featuring variable VALVETRONIC valve control, this 2.5 liter engine offers power and fuel efficiency while contributing to the well-balanced distribution of axle loads.

In terms of performance, the new BMW X3 2.5si delivers a maximum output of 218 hp (+ 26 hp over the previous X3 2.5i) and peak torque of 250 Nm. Acceleration from 0 to 100 km/h is accomplished in 8.5 seconds, with a top speed rated at 210 km/h. In spite of these high performance figures, average fuel consumption in the EU cycle is an efficient 10.1 kilometers/litre.

The new BMW X3 2.5si is equipped with a six-speed automatic transmission that features the latest in converter technology and particularly powerful software as standard. These innovations serve to reduce reaction and gearshift times by up to 50 per cent compared to a conventional automatic transmission.

For SAV enthusiasts looking to balance high performance with added fuel economy, BMW offers the new BMW X3 2.0d. Featuring the four-cylinder diesel power unit with the latest generation common-rail fuel injection, which was honoured as "Best in Technical Innovation" at the 2006 Car of the Year Awards, the new BMW X3 2.0d achieves a maximum output of 150 hp, with torque peaking at 330 Nm. Acceleration from 0 to 100 km/h is in 10.2 seconds, with a top speed of198 km/h.

The new BMW X3 2.0d comes with a six-speed manual transmission for sporty performance, while offering thrifty fuel consumption of 13.3 kilometers/liter based on the EU combined cycle.

Striking and Dynamic Design.

The new BMW X3 offers a fresh appeal with innovative design features at the front and rear, thereby providing a sophisticated yet sporting appearance.

At the front, a larger and more prominent kidney grille sits above a redesigned front bumper and a new color-coded spoiler. New dual circular headlights with light sources and reflectors housed beneath a clear glass cover provide the "six-eye face" distinctive to BMW X models. This look is further enhanced by fog lamps arranged on one line extending diagonally to the outside from the main headlights to the wheels. When seen with either the 18-inch light alloy wheels on the new BMW X3 2.5si or the new 17-inch light alloy wheels on the new BMW X3 2.0d, the new X3 gives the onlooker the impression of a dynamic vehicle crouching powerfully on the road.

Viewed from the side, the profile of the new BMW X3 stands out clearly through its discreet wedge shape which is further enhanced by the lower character line. This specific contour line is taken up in the lower side area of the front and rear air dams, and gives further emphasis to the sleek, stretched and dynamic look of the vehicle.

New rear light clusters feature rods of LED lights that provide a powerful and striking night design, while also giving the BMW X3 a clear distinction during the day. The styling of the rear bodywork has also been changed with color-coded panels now extending lower down the bodywork.

Inside the SAV, the harmonious lines of the new BMW X3 extend smoothly into and within the interior. The new BMW X3 SAV sports a refreshed multi-function three-spoke steering wheel while distinct enhancements to the center console have also been made.

BMW xDrive: Permanent all-wheel drive the intelligent way

The new BMW X3 owes its all-round outstanding agility largely to BMW's permanent, intelligent xDrive all-wheel-drive system. By ensuring fully variable front-to-rear power distribution via a power divider complete with an electronically controlled multiple-plate clutch, BMW xDrive feeds the power of the engine quickly and precisely to where it can be used best. The result is not only maximum traction on difficult terrain, but also superior driving dynamics, with the system counteracting any over - or understeer in bends right from the start.

Dynamic Stability Control (DSC): Enhanced to an even higher standard

The new BMW X3 features an even more sophisticated system of Dynamic Stability Control now enhanced by numerous additional functions: BMW's new DSC not only ensures superior driving stability and traction, but also optimises the effect of the brakes by increasing brake pressure as required in response to even the slightest fading under extremely high brake temperatures.

Building up moderate brake pressure at an early point in time, the system also enhances brake standby in situations likely to require spontaneous application of the brakes. Regular Dry Braking, which is activated automatically as soon as the driver switches on the windscreen wipers, optimizes brake performance in the wet.

DBC Dynamic Brake Control automatically maximises brake pressure in an emergency when the driver is required to brake all-out. And lastly, the Set-Off Assistant significantly facilitates the process of setting off on an uphill gradient. DSC Dynamic Stability Control also comprises the ABS anti-lock brake system, ASC Automatic Stability Control, HDC Hill Descent Control, Trailer Stability Control, and CBC Cornering Brake Control preventing the vehicle from swerving whenever the driver applies the brakes lightly in a bend.

For the first time on a BMW X model, DTC Dynamic Traction Control is also included in the new DSC system. DTC allows a particularly sporting and active style of motoring by offering the driver higher lateral acceleration all the way to a light and controllable drift in bends. With DTC, thresholds for intervention by the engine and the brakes are raised to a higher level allowing the BMW X3 is able to set off smoothly under difficult conditions such as loose gravel.

The Athletic Arrival of the new BMW X3 SAV is now available at all authorized BMW dealers.

The new BMW X3 2.5si is now available at Php 3.750 Mil while the new X3 2.0d is offered at Php 3.190 Mil. Adventure-seeking BMW enthusiasts can experience the Sheer Driving Pleasure of the new BMW X3 Sports Activity Vehicle exclusively at all authorized BMW dealers; namely: Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Autohaus BMW (Quezon City), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Klassik BMW (Araneta Avenue – Quezon Avenue, Quezon City), Priemere Cars BMW (Pampanga) and Performance BMW (Cebu).

The new BMW X3

M·PS 4348
M·PS 4348

The new BMW Z4 Coupé: Sleek and Stylish

BMW Z4 Coupé

Enhanced driving pleasure for the discerning individual The New BMW Z4 Coupé– now in the Philippines

The coupé has a long tradition at BMW. As far back as the 1930s, the BMW 327 was lauded as a truly outstanding two-seater and remains a legend to this day. Even then, the coupé' was widely appreciated as a particularly sporting grand tourer with two doors and a fixed roof. With the modern interpretation of a traditional car concept, BMW brings back the excitement and driving pleasure of the classic coupé through the introduction a very special car: the new BMW Z4 Coupé. After arousing emotions, a feeling of desire, and gasps of great anticipation worldwide – the new BMW Z4 Coupé is finally in the Philippine shores with the debut of the BMW Z4 3.0si Coupé. Developed from the start as a high performance sports car, the new BMW Z4 Coupé offers distinctive qualities from the very first mile - a weight-optimised body, ultra-modern chassis and suspension, and a 265 hp 3.0 liter straight-six power unit setting the standard worldwide in its class.

An athlete with a striking physique – the design of the BMW Z4 Coupé.

The new Coupé is recognisable at very first sight as a typical BMW, but also stands out clearly as an unparalleled high-performance sports car. A triumph of modern design, the BMW Z4 Coupé simply looks impressive at first sight.

The entire front section of the BMW Z4 Coupé – like that of the BMW Z4 Roadster – emanates a thrilling sense of power and forward-urging dynamism. Powerful lines on the engine compartment lid flow towards the kidney grille, while the contours of the air intakes moving up to the kidney grille from beneath guide the eyes more towards the wide track of the car. The flowing roof line then visibly moves the car's centre of gravity to the rear, right above the rear axle. The lowered contour of the roof in the middle, a classic design feature characterising a genuine sports car, further accentuate an image of speed, dynamism, and power.

In all, the combination of the car's design elements interacts to create a distinctive, commanding forward thrust with the new BMW Coupé appearing to literally leap ahead.

Chassis and suspension of the new BMW Z4 Coupé: Sheer Driving Pleasure to the Limit

Driving pleasure to the utmost limit is the domain of the BMW Z4 Coupé 3.0si. And indeed, the chassis and suspension is built and set up to offer everything required for this kind of superiority – well-balanced axle load distribution, a low centre of gravity as well as rear-wheel drive. These features ensure sporty handling, supreme traction and driving performance under challenging conditions including high speeds in bends.

Engine of the Year Award-winning power units.

Under the immense hood of BMW Z4 Coupé 3.0si is BMW's 3.0-litre power unit that has won Engine of the Year Award five-times. Built of a technologically advanced magnesium-and-aluminum hybrid block casting, the inline-six engine produces 265 horsepower at 6,600 rpm, with torque peaking at 315 Newton-meters. Mated with a six-speed automatic transmission with paddle shifters on the steering wheel, the BMW Z4 Coupé 3.0si accelerates from 0–100 km/h is in 5.7 seconds and achieves a top speed of 250 km/h (electronically limited). Available on special order is the BMW Z4 M Coupé, the ultra high-performance sports car powered by a 3.2-litre straight-six M engine sporting the following performance features: 343 hp maximum output at an engine speed of 7,900 rpm, maximum engine speed of 8,000 rpm; 365 Newton-meters of torque; power-to-weight ratio of just 5.6 kilos/hp; acceleration to 100 km/h in 5.0 seconds and top speed of 250 km/h (electronically limited). This 3.2-litre straight-six engine, featured as well in the BMW Z4 M Roadster, was recently given the "2006 Engine of the Year Award" as the best power unit in its class – a recognition that it has achieved for the past six consecutive years.

Being far less reserved than its elegant design, the BMW Z4 Coupé also plays one of the catchiest street-legal sound tracks. The sound from the high-performance engine clearly reveals a focus on superior engine output and performance thus offering the driver and passenger an authentic sports car experience.

Superior safety functions for maximum driving enjoyment.

The BMW Z4 Coupé comes standard with all the active and passive safety features BMW is known for: DSC Dynamic Stability Control with ASC Automatic Stability Control that controls slip of the drive wheels, CBC Cornering Brake Control, DTC Dynamic Traction Control which enables the driver to improve traction at the touch of a button on surfaces with a low frictional coefficient and DBC Dynamic Brake Control to maximise brake pressure whenever required, such as in an emergency braking maneuver. Bi-xenon headlights additionally provide optimum visibility at night.

The fascinating BMW Z4 Coupés are available at all authorized BMW dealers.

Aficionados of two-door sports cars can experience the Sheer Driving Pleasure of the new BMW Z4 Coupé exclusively at all authorized BMW dealers; namely: Klassik BMW (Araneta Avenue – Quezon Avenue, Quezon City), Autohaus BMW (Quezon City), Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Priemere Cars BMW (Pampanga) and Performance BMW (Cebu).

BMW 3 Series with complete M Sport Exterior Package

BMW 1 Series with complete M Sport Exterior Package

BMW offers "The Power to Charge"

0% Interest on M Performance Packages with BPI Credit Cards

BMW Philippines introduces its latest Aftersales promotion - M Performance packages available at 0% interest with BPI Credit Cards. From January 1 to March 31, 2007, BMW owners can upgrade their vehicles with M aerodynamic kits, high performance M-style alloy wheels, or the complete M Sport Package and avail of 0% interest for 3, 6 or 12 equal installments using any BPI Credit Card.

The BMW M Sports Packages are based on the design of the ultra powerful BMW M cars. BMW M Aerokits consist of aerodynamic front and rear bumper trims and side skirts (on selected models). These weight-optimized components enhance performance by providing improved aerodynamic qualities and responsive handling. M-style alloy wheels additionally provide the vehicle with an unmistakable racing character and sporty appearance.

Available for the BMW 1 Series, 3 Series (E90 and E46), 5 Series (E60 and E39) and the X3, each M Sports Package is perfectly matched to the respective BMW model in terms of style and functionality.

BMW M Sports Packages are available at a special 0% financing plan at all authorized BMW dealers, namely Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Autohaus BMW (Quezon City-Libis), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Klassik BMW (Quezon City- Araneta-Quezon Avenue), Premier BMW (Pampanga), and Performance BMW (Cebu).

BMW Motorrad: The Best of Three Worlds

For those who love the thrills on two wheels, the passion for riding takes different forms. These thrills are embodied in three worlds of BMW Motorrad – the worlds of Enduro, Sport, and Touring. Whatever the challenge, destination or terrain, BMW Motorrad offers exciting premium motorcycles and riding gear suited to each world.

Enduro World: The Thrill of the Challenge

For motorcyclists who love the outdoors, boundaries are limitless and satisfaction comes from the toughest challenges. For these adventurers, BMW Motorrad offers a full line of medium-to-large displacement touring Enduros that feature innovative engineering, excellent ergonomics and exceptional handling for maximum enjoyment and safety on any surface. BMW Motorrad Enduros are powerful and reliable motorcycles that have been tested on the toughest routes in the world, including the daunting Paris-Dakar Rallye.

F 650 GS

The BMW F 650 GS is the ideal choice for riders who are attracted to the Enduro look and feel and yet spend the majority of their riding on paved roads. A model intended for mainly on-road travels yet still very capable of handling off-road riding, the BMW F 650 GS offers a relaxed, upright riding position and three seat height adjustments. Lightweight construction and overall compact dimensions make this premium Enduro motorcycle feel smaller and lighter – thus improving maneuverability.

The BMW F 650 GS is powered by a refined BMW-designed, 4-valve single-cylinder engine with dual ignition and a new and advanced BMS-C II computerized engine-control unit that dynamically manages spark and fuel delivery to suit any riding condition.

F 650 GS Dakar

In addition to the F 650 GS, BMW offers the F 650 GS Dakar. True to its rallye-inspired paint, the Dakar is a lightweight off-road bike that offers a higher riding position, longer-travel suspension and larger wheels designed to carry dirt-specification tires, thereby providing more off-road capability compared to its versatile F 650 GS counterpart.

R 1200 GS

The BMW R 1200 GS is a long-distance Touring Enduro equipped with a durable air cooled 'boxer' engine. These renowned BMW 'boxer' engines derive their names from the horizontally opposed configuration of the pistons, which provide low sprung weight and uncomplicated reliability.

In particular, the 1,200 cc boxer twin in the BMW R 1200 GS is the biggest engine in an Enduro motorcycle, and provides an impressive output of 100 hp with muscular torque constantly available regardless of engine speed. At the same time, Enduro enthusiasts will also benefit from the improved chassis and suspension system, as well as the completely new electronics of the R 1200 GS, for riding comfort and convenience.

With these features, the BMW R 1200 GS is a popular choice for extended trips to the province where asphalt roads often turn to dirt tracks.

R 1200 GS Adventure

The BMW R 1200 GS Adventure is the ultimate long-distance Enduro bike for the extreme traveler.

Named "Best Adventure Bike for 2006" by Motorcyclist Magazine, the BMW R 1200 GS Adventure is not only the professional machine for bold riders participating in overland expeditions, it also appeals to the discerning customer looking for impressive handling qualities and a striking appearance.

Compared to the R 1200 GS, the BMW R 1200 GS Adventure offers additional equipment for an even higher standard of long-distance riding: a large 33-litre fuel tank, an aerodynamic windshield for enhanced protection from wind and weather, robust tank and engine protection hoops, height-adjustable seat, as well as extra-wide rider footrests combined with adjustable gearshift and brake levers.

R 1200 HP2 Enduro

The new BMW HP2 is an exceptionally high-performance Enduro designed for the hard-core off-road enthusiast and professional rider, built to conquer even the most demanding enduro tracks in the world.

While in technical terms, the engine of the BMW HP2 is based on the R 1200 GS, this is where the similarities end. The frame of the BMW HP2 is stripped down and designed for 'no-holds-barred' off-roading. Its 105 hp engine delivers enormous power and 115 Nm of torque. Lightweight suspension system (with 270mm travel at the front), rear strut air damping system, a 13L fuel tank, 21" inch wheels, engine guards and recovery bars guarantee supreme agility and easy control even on the toughest terrain.

F650 GS
DAKAR

R1200GS

R1200 GS
ADVENTURE

The Touring World: The Thrill of Escape.

Travelling the world on two wheels offers a unique experience – a sensual connection that can be savored, whether alone or with a pillion passenger, as the journey traverses through endless miles of magnificent landscape.

For these world wanderers, comfort, reliability and style are important considerations. Designed for maximum comfort at any speed, BMW Motorrad Touring motorcycles are the perfect travel companions for every kind of touring experience.

F 800 ST

The Sport-Touring model of the newly introduced mid-range model series, the BMW F 800 ST is a versatile motorcycle well-suited for the intermediate rider on a short cross country tour, a trip through the city, or a long holiday trip with luggage.

The BMW F 800 ST features the same powerful and highly sophisticated 2-cylinder in-line engine found in the F 800 S sports variant. This compact Tourer however differs from its Sporting twin in function: a higher windscreen, fairing with side panels, higher tubular handlebar, luggage rack, dynamic wheel design, and painted wheel cover at the front – all in a seamless combination to provide style, comfort, and sheer touring fun.

R 1200 ST

The powerful 1,200 cc flat twin 110 hp boxer engine with a low-center of gravity featured in the BMW R 1200 ST provides an impressive, powerful performance for the Sport-Touring Rider. The bike's superb agility and dynamic performance is a result of its lightweight construction at 205 kilograms, optimized rider step length, and low weight shaft drive. BMW Paralever and Telelever suspension further contribute to its high-level of touring comfort and safety.

The stylish aerodynamic fairing ensures excellent protection from wind and weather while individually adjustable seats provide appropriate comfort to both the rider and passenger. For lengthy travel purposes, high-quality and perfectly fitting BMW luggage solutions transform the BMW R 1200 ST into a versatile Touring bike.

R 1200 RT

The BMW R 1200 RT is the relaxed Touring bike that provides maximum comfort, handling agility and dynamic performance riding pleasure on long journeys. While the BMW R 1200 RT features the same powerful 110 hp boxer engine as the Sport-Touring BMW R 1200 ST, the RT offers additional leisure amenities such as a generous car-like instrument cluster, as well as the option for radio and CD changer.

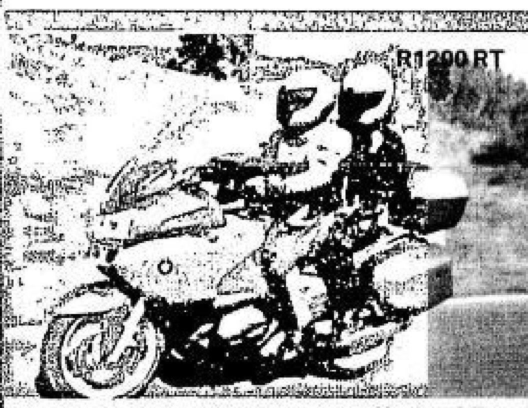
The design of the BMW R 1200 RT is characterized by clean lines and striking surfaces. Body fairing is subdivided into separate areas and occupies different levels, which visually highlights the lightweight appearance of the Touring Bike. Together with the electrically adjustable windshield, the fairing provides protection from wind and weather.

K 1200 GT

For the bold and confident Touring bike enthusiast, the BMW K 1200 GT "Gran Turismo" is the perfect choice. Power, refinement, and dynamic performance are all combined in this visually stunning premium Touring motorcycle.

The BMW K 1200 GT is at the top-end of BMW's line-up of touring bikes, equipped with a powerful state-of-the-art in-line 4 cylinder engine that develops a maximum output of 152 hp and 130 Nm. It also features innovative wheel guidance systems, the BMW Duolever at the front to prevent nosedives without diminished maneuverability; and the EVO-Paralever at the rear for maximum long-distance riding comfort.

Protection from the elements is also provided by an electrically adjustable windscreen. The innovative ergonomic design of the footrests as well as the fully adjustable seat and handlebars, offer maximum freedom of movement and allows the rider and passenger to cruise in a relaxed position at all times. Xenon headlights and a digital flat screen instrument cluster further contribute to the luxurious touring experience the BMW K 1200 GT offers.

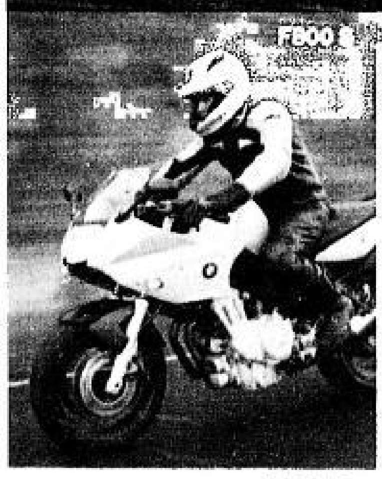

R1200 RT

F800 ST

K1200 GT

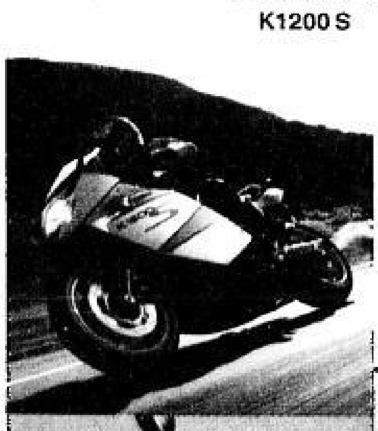
R1200 ST

The Sport World: The Thrill of Speed



R1200 S

K1200 S



K1200 R SPORT

The exhilaration of speed, the body crouched to a perfectly aerodynamic position, high speed cornering at the very edge of two wheels: these are the thrills that every sports motorcycle enthusiast yearns for.

BMW Motorrad sportsbikes combine outstanding performance and comfort with the latest motorcycle technology to deliver an exhilarating ride. With exceptional power-to-weight ratios, outstanding aerodynamic qualities, and breathtaking acceleration and braking rates, BMW Motorrad sports bikes are excellent on the race track as well as on the highway. More importantly, decades of experience at the pinnacle of motorcycle racing combined with technological innovations also ensure that BMW Motorrad sportsbikes are equipped with the most advanced safety features.

F 800 S

Powerful, reliable and attractive, the new BMW F 800 S is built for riders who have outgrown the thrill of screeching stoplight-to-stoplight spurts and now look for a more refined sport riding experience. The athletic F 800 S offers big bike enthusiasts impressive power and torque, superior responsiveness while adding the benefits of head-turning looks and fuel economy.

In addition, its belt-driven all-new 800-cc Parallel-Twin engine with four-valve technology delivers low maintenance reliability since the belts last without the need for retightening or re-greasing for as much as 40,000 kilometers.

K 1200 R Sport

A semi-faired variant of the popular BMW K 1200 R, which made its debut as the strongest naked bike in the world, the BMW K 1200 R Sport offers added protection against the elements for high speed cruising. An essential feature of the K 1200 R Sport is the semi-fairing, which is integrated harmoniously into the overall design of the motorcycle. In combination with the added protection of this semi-fairing is a bigger windshield compared to its naked counterpart. The K 1200 R Sport also offers high handlebars for top-precision handling, and a long wheelbase for maximum riding stability. Providing the highest standard of riding dynamics and performance at all times and under all conditions, the BMW K 1200 R Sport is powered by an in-line 4-cylinder engine that delivers a maximum output of 163 hp and 127 Nm of torque.

R 1200 S

For the weekend racer who enjoys the thrill of sport motorcycling, the BMW R 1200 S provides outstanding sporting performance and dynamic riding characteristics. Regarded as the most powerful 'boxer' the world has ever seen, the BMW R 1200 S derives its muscle from a 1,200 cc flat-twin boxer engine with peak power of 122 hp and 112 Nm of torque and dry weight of only 190 kg.

In looks, the BMW R 1200 S exudes pure power and dynamism – from the front fairing design with the BMW "kidney" grille and the asymmetric dual headlights to the unmistakable silencer at the rear and the LED tail lights. And while the BMW R 1200 S is more than capable of delivering sporting performance, this bike has also been ergonomically designed to provide the rider with a relaxed seating position for effortless riding enjoyment even on long distances. In all, the the BMW R 1200 S is guaranteed to delight the most avid amateur sport motorcyclist during race track training on the Nurburgring or during a trip on long highways.

K 1200 S

The BMW K 1200 S is the most powerful motorcycle ever produced by BMW Motorrad. The current world land speed record-holder in the FIM 1,000-1,350cc stock, partially streamlined, naturally aspirated motorcycle class, the BMW K 1200 S is the ultimate riding machine for the expert sports biker.

The BMW K 1200 S uniquely combines technology, performance and design. Its high-end 4-cylinder 16V engine impressively demonstrates the state of the art in engine technology: 167 bhp, 0 to 100 km/h in 2.8 seconds, 130 Nm for 60 to140 km/h in 7.1 seconds. Yet, its unbridled engine power is effortlessly controlled by a newly designed six-speed gearbox and an all-new Duolever front suspension system, that allows the BMW K 1200 S to deliver comfort, nimble control and an unprecedented capability for speed.

1 Passion, 2 Wheels, 3 Worlds

The BMW Motorrad offers the widest motorcycle model range in the premium segment, delivering sheer riding pleasure on two wheels – regardless of a rider's style, skill or destination of choice.

BMW Motorrad models offer the latest innovative motorcycle technological and safety features. ABS II anti-lock brake system as well as fully controlled three-way catalytic converter introduced on BMW motorcycles more than 15 years ago is fitted as standard in all BMW Motorrad models in the Philippines.

BMW Paralever rear suspension damping system featured in the K Series combined with the cast single-unit swing arm and toothed belt drive, ensures a smooth and sensitive response to minor bumps on the road as well as superior stability on bad or strongly undulating surfaces.

BMW Motorrad also accomplished world-first innovations by introducing the BMW Motorrad Duolever, the air spring damper system found in the BMW HP2 Enduro, Electronic Suspension Adjustment (ESA) and mass compensation via the swing arm. Further progressive technologies have been adapted and carried over from automobile construction as well, such as anti-knock engine management and xenon headlights.

The new BMW Motorrad Rider Equipment: Combining safety, comfort and style.

Complementing the BMW Motorrad model range is the latest collection of BMW Motorrad Rider Equipment. BMW motorcycle buyers and enthusiasts can choose from a wide range of rider gear and equipment, with new functions, colors and designs for 2007. Featuring the latest technological advancements in rider equipment, BMW Motorcycle Riding Gear is well-designed, comfortable, and stylish – clearly reflecting the sporting and dynamic orientation of BMW Motorrad.

The latest BMW Motorrad Enduro, Sport and Touring motorcycles – and BMW Rider Equipment and Gear are available at the authorized dealers of BMW Motorrad, namely, Autohaus BMW (Libis, Quezon City) and Autozentrum BMW (Alabang). Selected BMW Sport Motorcycles will also be presented at the BMW Xpo on February 9-11, 2007.